

GRIMSBY METHODISM

AND

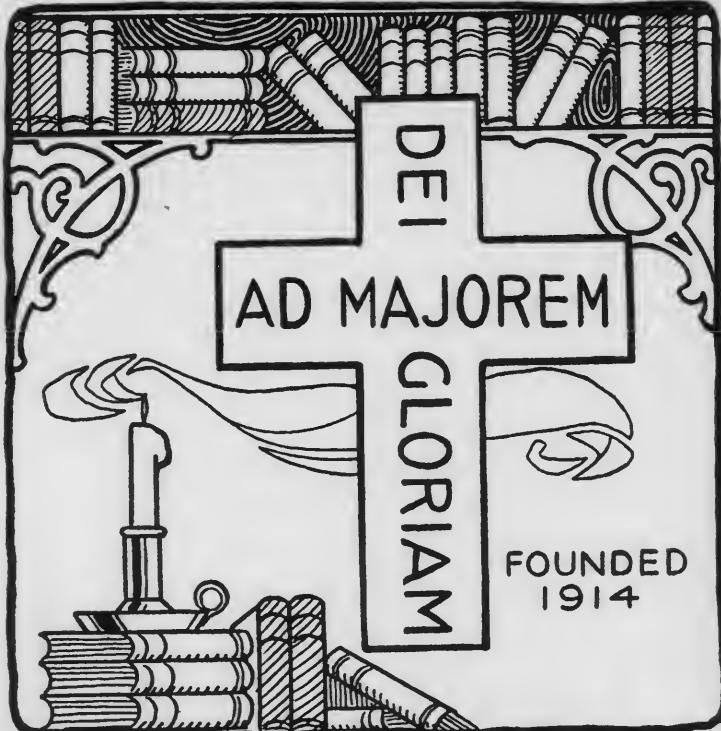
THE WESLEYS IN LINCOLNSHIRE



GEORGE LESTER

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GRIMSBY METHODISM

(1743—1889)

AND

The Wesleys in Lincolnshire.

BY

GEORGE LESTER.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY REV. DR. RIGG.

“History is Philosophy teaching by examples.”

London:

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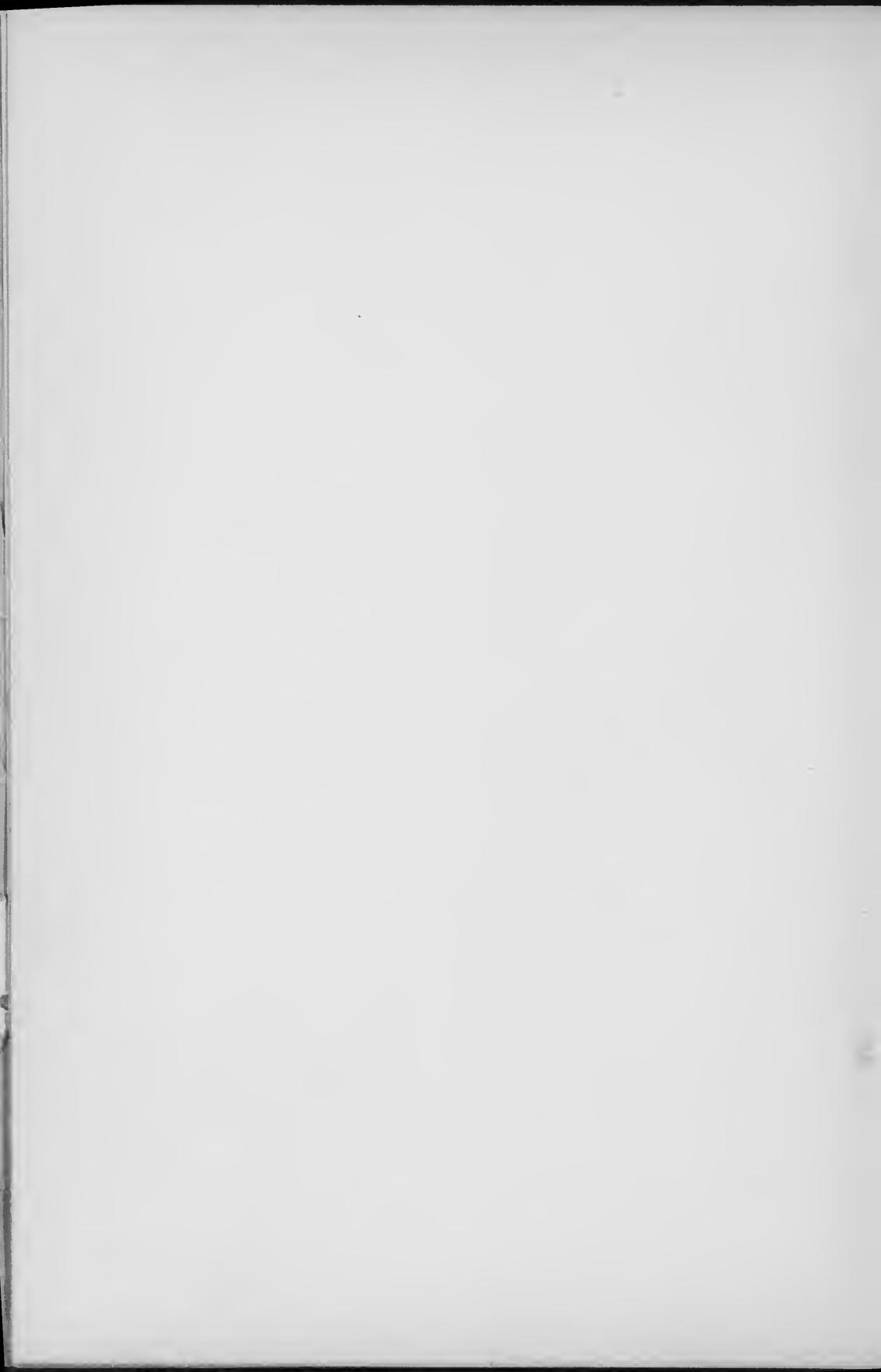
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To

THE REVEREND CHARLES HENRY KELLY,
PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE,
MY WIFE'S FRIEND AND MY OWN,
I DEDICATE
THIS LITTLE VOLUME
WITH SINCERE PERSONAL AFFECTION,
AND IN
ADMIRATION OF THOSE FINE QUALITIES
OF MIND AND HEART
WHICH HIS YEAR OF OFFICE HAS CALLED
SO CONSPICUOUSLY INTO PROMINENCE.



P R E F A C E.

THIS little book is not in any sense a history of the town and borough of Grimsby, save that here and there allusion has been made to certain items of municipal history. I have read Dr. George Oliver's writings, and other publications in the form of pamphlets and papers. There is in these, and other available matter, a sufficient store of material to enable some enterprising archæologist to produce an entertaining record of Grimsby,—its charters, its ancient importance, its collapse, its ill-fated hopes, and its eventual prosperity. Such an attempt did not, however, come within the scope of my less pretentious project.

Nor was it possible to me—however much I might have desired it—to attempt an account of the past labours and present condition of religious communities other than Wesleyan. There are in

Grimsby three parish churches, with several district churches and missions. Primitive Methodism is in evidence in its six chapels and its large and flourishing societies. The Baptists have two churches, the Congregationalists one, the Methodist Free Churches one, the United Presbyterian Church of England one. There is a Scandinavian church, a Salvation Army barracks, several undenominational mission halls and rooms, a Roman Catholic church, and a Jews' synagogue.

In dealing with the subject to which I addressed myself in this volume,—“Grimsby Methodism,”—I have spared no pains in my endeavour to attain to accuracy. How far I may have succeeded in this regard, others must judge. Certainly, it has been an advantage to me in collecting statistical information, that I happen to be, for the third year, the Financial Secretary of the Hull District, of which Grimsby Circuits form part.

I acknowledge a large indebtedness to a pamphlet, prepared fifty years ago, by the Rev. Joshua Hocken, entitled “A Brief History of Wesleyan-Methodism in the Grimsby Circuit” (67 pp.). A liberal use of that publication has been made in the compilation of this book.

My special thanks are due, and are hereby presented, to Mr. Anderson Bates, to whose courtesy I am indebted for permission to use several important documents never before made public ; to Mr. Ernest L. Grange, M.A., LL.M., for the loan of rare archæological books and papers ; and to Mr. George Stampe for valuable assistance and for a free access to his unique collection of Wesleyan books, papers, and other literary curiosities. I also tender hearty thanks to the President of the Conference, to the Rev. Dr. Rigg, to my colleagues, and to friends, too numerous to mention by name, both in town and country, for help and encouragement given to my undertaking. Moreover, I should fail in gratitude, did I not record my indebtedness to my wife, and to my eldest daughter, who have, respectively, assisted as my amanuensis.

The appropriateness of including in this volume the papers entitled "The Wesleys in Lincolnshire," lies in the fact that South Ormsby—Samuel Wesley's first benefice—is only some four-and-twenty miles from Grimsby, whilst, as to Epworth, it was intimately associated with Grimsby for twenty-two years after the introduction of Methodism into this town. The first and second of these

papers have already appeared in the *Methodist Recorder*.

In the hope that this volume—the preparation of which has been to me a labour of love—may be some small contribution to “The Forward Movement” of Methodism, I now commit it to the indulgent attention of the Wesleyan-Methodists of East Lincolnshire.

GEORGE LESTER.

1, ST. JOHN'S TERRACE, GREAT GRIMSBY,
Feb. 1890.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

BY THE

REV. DR. RIGG.

MY friend, the Rev. George Lester, has asked me to write an "Introductory Note" to his little volume on "Grimsby Methodism, etc." It gives me much pleasure to comply with his request. Well-written local histories of Methodism are full of interest and of suggestiveness. They bring us back to "fresh springs," and refresh the monotony of modern life by the originality of ancient rural conditions, and of characters racy of the soil of provincial England before the smoothing iron of nineteenth-century civilisation had almost done away with local peculiarities.

East Lincolnshire especially, of which, so far as Methodist growth and extension are concerned, Grimsby may be fairly regarded as the centre, has

much, in its memories and traditions, that well deserves to be gathered up as a distinct section of Methodist history.

In Mr. Lester a painstaking historian and an interesting and practised hand has been found to do the work which was needed, and he has done it with a loving care and vivacity.

The appended chapters relating to the Wesley family, and their parochial work and life at Epworth and Wroot, add not a little to the interest of the volume.

JAMES H. RIGG.

WESLEYAN TRAINING COLLEGE, WESTMINSTER.
3rd Feb. 1890.

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GRIMSBY METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

HOW METHODISM WAS INTRODUCED.

WHEN the first Methodist preacher came to Grimsby (1743), the town—once thriving and populous—had a population numbering only about a thousand souls. In that year there were but three marriages celebrated in the parish church of St. James. The only places of worship were St. James' Church, and a small meeting house in Silver Street. There was a general deadness to religion ; rudeness, drunkenness, and Sabbath desecration prevailed. Bull-baiting had ceased to be a pastime,* but other sports, scarcely less brutal and demoralising, were followed with avidity. Traditions touching certain of these, recall scenes which would be amusing, but that they indicate the deplorable condition of the people, morally. The records of Mr. John Nelson and the Rev. Charles Wesley, quoted hereafter, show

* See Note A at end.

that mob-law sometimes prevailed here, as elsewhere in the county of Lincoln. Despite all this, there were some in Grimsby who were alive to God.

It was when he was nearing his thirty-ninth birthday that the Rev. John Wesley first visited Lincolnshire as an evangelist. His father had spent the greater part of his life in this county, first as rector of South Ormsby, then as rector of Epworth and of Wroot. John Wesley's only experience of parochial duty was gained in Lincolnshire, during those two years (about) for which he had acted as his father's curate.

On Saturday, 5th June, 1742, he came to Epworth —his native place—and spent some eight days in and around that town. On Sunday evening, 6th June, not being permitted to preach in the church, he stood upon his father's tomb in the churchyard, and preached to "such a congregation as Epworth never saw before." The following Sabbath, having preached at Haxey at seven, and twice at Wroot, he preached in the evening "in Epworth churchyard, to a vast multitude gathered from all parts." In that "vast multitude" were some from Grimsby. These resolved to seek salvation, and united in prayer with and for each other.

In February of 1743 Mr. Wesley was again in Epworth, when William Blow, a cordwainer of this town—residing in the High Street, now known as the Old Market Place—journeyed thither to

hear him, and to request him to visit Grimsby. His engagements not permitting of this, he sent John Nelson—one of his first lay preachers—who thus describes his visit :—

“ When Mr. Wesley set out for Newcastle, he desired me to go to Grimsby, in Lincolnshire, and to spend a few days there among some people that had once run well, but were turned out of the way by one that had come down from London, who had got into the poor sinnership, and was made free from the righteous law of God, and from all ordinances and good works. He brought many of them into his own liberty ; so that they sold their prayer-books, left off reading and praying, and followed the motions of their own minds, which they called the Lamb in their hearts : but one or two remained under the law as they called it ; that is, they still continued to read the Bible, and durst not leave off prayer, nor any other ordinance that Christ had appointed. These came to Epworth to seek the pure Gospel, and when they heard Mr. Wesley they said, ‘ His word was as sweet as wine to a thirsty soul.’ I set out with a great sense of my own weakness, and was ready to turn back ; then I opened my Bible where these words were written, ‘ I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the ground.’ I cried out, ‘ Lord, give me strength and understanding for the work, if Thou hast called me to it.’ I opened my book again on Isaiah xiv. 1 : ‘ The Lord will have mercy on Jacob,

and will yet choose Israel, and set them in their own land, and the strangers shall be joined with them.' That night I came to Epworth and preached to a large congregation ; next morning, I and a man that belonged to Grimsby, and a boy about twelve years of age, set out on foot for Grimsby ; but night came upon us when we were five miles short of it, and there being no public-house near, we went to several farmhouses to ask for lodging, but could get none. Then we went to a poor house, where I prevailed with the people to let the boy lie with two of their own boys ; and I said to the man, 'Let us go and seek a bed somewhere else, or a stable to lie in.' As we went on in the dark we saw a light at a small distance, and we went over a field to it. I knocked at the door, and they bade us come in : there were four men, three women, and two boys sitting by the fire. As soon as I entered I said, 'Peace be to this house !' at which words the people started up as if I had thrown fire at them. I said, 'We are two wayfaring men, and if you will entertain us for a night, we will satisfy you.' They got us a good supper, and made up a good bed. I talked to them about the way of salvation, and went to prayer with them, and they were so affected that the master and the mistress talked to me two hours after they were in bed. The next morning after breakfast I went to pay the woman, but she said her husband charged her to take nothing, but, on the contrary, to give us some

money to support us on the road ; but I replied, 'Not one farthing will we have, and if you will not take our money, I pray God reward you with everlasting consolation !' We then went where we had left the boy, and paid the people for him, and set out for Grimsby, which we reached by ten o'clock. The people soon heard that I was come, and flocked to me directly, when I prayed with them, and began to exhort ; but many of them despised my words, saying I was too legal for them. I then took up my Bible, and said, 'Hear ye the word of the Lord !' So I read two or three verses, and bade them try themselves by that standard : then I read in another place, and said, 'If you will compare your consciences with these scriptures, you may see what state your souls are in.' One woman turned pale, and began to tremble, saying, 'I clearly see we are deluded, and that what we called the Lamb in our hearts is nothing but the devil.' Then she cried out, 'Alas ! alas ! what must we do ?' We went to prayer again, and God made the kingdom of Satan to shake once more in that place. The second night a schoolmaster sent me word that he would give me leave to preach in his school, which would hold several hundreds of people ; but those that had fallen into the poor sinnership told me, if I did, they durst not go to hear me, for they should be mobbed and I should be killed. I said, 'As the gentleman has made me the offer, I will accept it, and by the grace of God will preach if

there were as many devils in it as there are tiles on it.' Accordingly I went, and it was well filled from side to side, and the people behaved well; I found great liberty in speaking, and when I had done several cried out, 'This is the way of salvation!'

"When I came back to Brother Blow's, those that had been shorn of their strength confessed their fearfulness, and said, 'While we continued in the spirit in which we were converted, we were as bold as lions. Oh! what shall we do to recover our strength?' I told them to humble themselves before the Lord with prayer and fasting, and He would snatch them out of the snare of the devil and give them back their first love. I preached again the next morning, and set out for Epworth."*

One result of this visit was the formation of a Methodist Society, consisting of about fifteen members, of whom were William and Catherine Blow, Robert and Elizabeth Blow, William and Elizabeth Walker, Alice Hunsfield, Ann Lusby, and Henry Simpson. The Class Meeting was held in William Blow's house; here also a prayer meeting was held on Sunday evenings. There was no preaching, but one of the members sometimes read one of the Homilies. The schoolroom in which John Nelson preached belonged to a Mr. Francis Walker; it formed part of extensive premises known as Torret

* See "Early Methodist Preachers," vol. i., p. 65 (1865 ed.).

Hall, and was entered by a flight of steps on the outside from Bethlehem Street.

John Nelson paid two subsequent visits to Grimsby, concerning which he writes, in his *Journal*, thus:—

“June, 1743. . . . After some time I went into Lincolnshire again, and the congregation was so large at Grimsby that I was obliged to stand upon a table at Brother Blow’s back door for several days together. As I was preaching, the minister and three men came to play at quoits, as near the people as they could get; but with all their playing and shouting they could not draw any one from hearing.”

“1744 (Spring). . . . At Epworth we had peaceable and blessed meetings. But when I came to Grimsby the minister* got a man to beat the town-drum through the town, and went before the drum, and gathered all the rabble he could, giving them liquor to go with him to fight for the Church. When they came to Mr. Blow’s door, they set up three huzzas, and the parson cried out, ‘Pull down the house! pull down the house!’ But no one offered to touch the house till I had done preaching. Then they broke the windows till they had not left one whole square about the house; and as the people went out they abused them, till some of the mob began to fight their fellows for abusing the women, so that most of the people got away while they

* Rev. Samuel Prince, then vicar of Grimsby.

were fighting one with another. Not long after, the minister gathered them together again, and gave them more drink: then they came and broke the stanchions of the windows, pulling up the paving in the streets, which they threw in at the windows, and broke the household goods in pieces; the parson crying out, 'If they will not turn out the villain, that we may put him in the black ditch, pull down the house.' While they were drumming, cursing and swearing, fighting, and breaking the goods, one of their neighbours who was not a hearer went to an alderman and said, 'Some order must be taken with these men, for if they be suffered to go on as they do, they will ruin William Blow, and I fear they will kill somebody.' But the good Alderman said he would do nothing but lend them his mash-tub to pump the preacher in. Then the mob fell out again one with another, and dispersed after labouring from seven till almost twelve at night. The parson said to the drummer, 'I will reward you for your pains: but be sure to come at five in the morning, for the villain will be preaching again then.' So the drummer did, and began to beat just as I was going to give out the hymn. When he had beat for near three-quarters of an hour and saw it did not disturb us, he laid down his drum and stood to hear for himself, and the tears presently ran down his cheeks. When I had ended he expressed great sorrow for what he had done to disturb us.

As he and some others went up the town the parson met them, and bade them to be sure and come at seven o'clock. He said, 'No, sir; I will never beat a drum to disturb yonder people any more while breath is in my body.' So that we had great peace in our shattered house that night, and God's presence amongst us. The next day I went to Hainton, etc."

Dr. Southey, in his "Life of Wesley," says, "John Nelson had as high a spirit and as brave a heart as Englishman was ever blessed with." His behaviour during this unseemly attack was in keeping with that eulogy.

The Rev. Charles Wesley fared no better on the occasion of his only visit to this town, on 6th January, 1747, "where (says Dr. Whitehead, his biographer) he was saluted by a shouting mob. In the evening he attempted to preach at the room, but the mob was so violent he could not proceed. At length one of the rioters aimed a severe blow at Mr. Wesley, which a friend who stood near him received. Another of them cried out, 'What! you dog, do you strike a clergyman?' and fell upon his comrade. Immediately every man's hand was against his fellow; they began fighting and beating one another, till in a few minutes the room was cleared of all disturbers, when Mr. Wesley preached for half an hour without further molestation."

He preached at William Blow's house. On the

morning of his leaving Grimsby a large concourse of people assembled, from amongst whom some miscreant threw at him rotten eggs. The mob had not entirely disappeared as he mounted his horse to go away, when, turning to them, he said, "Before I come again the man on his pale horse will visit you," and he shook the dust off his feet as a testimony against them.

CHAPTER II.

REV. JOHN WESLEY AT GRIMSBY.

MR. WESLEY'S records of his visits to Grimsby, which extended over a period of forty-five years, are of so great interest that they are here presented *in extenso*. It little needs that either note or comment be added.

I.

Having described with how great difficulty and danger he crossed the Trent at Ferry, he thus proceeds :—

1743. *Monday, 24th October.*

"In the evening, the house at Grimsby not being able to contain one-fourth of the congregation, I stood in the street, and exhorted every prodigal to 'arise' and go to 'his Father.' One or two endeavoured to interrupt, but they were soon stilled by their own companions. The next day, *Tuesday, 25,* one in the town promised us the use of a large room, but was prevailed upon to retract his promise before the hour of preaching came. I then designed going to the Cross, but the rain prevented, so that

we were a little at a loss till we were offered a very convenient place by a ‘woman which was a sinner.’ I there declared ‘Him’ (about one o’clock) whom ‘God hath exalted, to give repentance and remission of sins.’ And God so confirmed the word of His grace that I marvelled any one could withstand Him.

“However, the prodigal held out till the evening, when I enlarged upon *her* sins and faith, who ‘washed our Lord’s feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.’ She was then utterly broken in pieces (as indeed was well nigh the whole congregation), and came after me to my lodgings, crying out, ‘O Sir! “what must I do to be saved ?”’ Being now informed of her case, I said, ‘Escape for your life—return instantly to your husband.’ She said, ‘But how can it be? Which way can I go? He is above an hundred miles off. I have just received a letter from him, and he is at Newcastle-upon-Tyne.’ I told her, ‘I am going for Newcastle in the morning; you may go with me. William Blow shall take you behind him.’ And so he did. Glory be to the Friend of sinners! He hath plucked one more brand out of the fire. Thou poor sinner, thou hast ‘received a prophet in the name of a prophet,’ and thou art found of Him that sent him.

“*Wed. 26.*—I enlarged upon those deep words, ‘Repent, and believe the Gospel.’ When I had

done, a man stood forth in the midst, one who had exceedingly troubled his brethren, vehemently maintaining (for the plague had spread hither also) that they ought not to pray, to sing, to communicate, to search the Scriptures, or to trouble themselves about works, but only to believe and be still ; and said with a loud voice, ‘ Mr. Wesley ! let me speak a few words. Is it not said, “ A certain man had two sons : and he said unto the younger, Go, work to-day in my vineyard ! And he answered, I will not ; but afterwards he repented and went ” ? I am he. I said yesterday, “ I will not go to hear him ; I will have nothing to do with him.” But I repent ; here is my hand—by the grace of God I will not leave you as long as I live.’

“ William Blow, Mrs. S., and I set out at six (*via* Epworth). During our whole journey to Newcastle I scarce observed her to laugh or even smile once. Nor did she ever complain of anything, or appear moved in the least with those trying circumstances which many times occurred in our way. A steady seriousness, or sadness rather, appeared in her whole behaviour and conversation, as became one that felt the burden of sin, and was groaning after salvation. In the same spirit, by all I could observe or learn, she continued during her stay at Newcastle. Not long after, her husband removed from thence, and wrote to her to follow him. She set out in a ship bound for Hull. A storm met them by the way,

the ship sprung a leak ; but though it was near the shore, on which many people flocked together, yet the sea ran so exceeding high that it was impossible to make any help. Mrs. S. was seen standing on the deck, as the ship gradually sunk ; and afterwards hanging by her hand on the ropes, till the masts likewise disappeared. Even then, for some moments, they could observe her floating upon the waves, till her clothes, which buoyed her up, being thoroughly wet, she sunk,—I trust into the ocean of God's mercy."

Dr. Southey deems this incident of sufficient interest to accord to it a place in one of the most entertaining chapters of his *Life of Wesley*—“Scenes of Itinerancy.”

2.

1745. *Wednesday, 17th April.*

“I rode by Epworth to Grimsby. The north-east wind was full in our face, and exceeding sharp. I began preaching before eight, but to such a congregation as I had not lately seen; so stupidly rude and noisy, encouraged by their fore-speaker, a drunken alehouse keeper. I singled him out, and fastened upon him till he chose to withdraw. The rest were soon calmed, and behaved very quietly till the service was ended.

“*Thursday, 18.—In the afternoon I rode to Hainton.*”

3.

1747. *Monday, 23rd February.*

"We reached Grimsby by five, and spoke to as many of the Society as could conveniently come at that time. About seven I would have preached to a very large audience, but a young gentleman, with his companions, quite drowned my voice, till a poor woman took up the cause, and by reciting a few passages of his life, wittily and keenly enough, turned the laugh of all his companions full upon him. He could not stand it, but hastened away. When he was gone I went on with little interruption. *Tuesday, 24.*—I wrote a few lines to Mr. C., giving him an account of his kinsman's behaviour. He obliged him to come straight to me and ask my pardon; since that time we have had no disturbance at Grimsby."

4.

1748. *Wednesday, 6th July.*

"At seven," he says, "I preached in the large room,* but it was not near large enough to contain the congregation. Many stood on the stairs and in the adjoining rooms, and many below in the street. The fear of God has lately spread in an uncommon degree among this people also. Nor has Mr. Prince been able to prevent it, though he bitterly curses us in the name of the Lord."

* A chamber over the Old Town Hall.

5.

1751. Friday, 10th May.

"It rained incessantly as we rode to Grimsby, where I preached to a mixed congregation, some of whom (the greater part) were exceeding serious, and some exceeding drunk. The Society, I found, was much alive to God."

6.

1752. Wednesday, 22nd April.

"I rode to Grimsby. The crowd was so great in the evening that the room was like an oven. The next night I preached at the end of the town, whither almost all the people, rich and poor, followed me; and I had a fair opportunity of closely applying that weighty question—"Lord, are there few that be saved?"

7.

1757. Saturday, 16th July.

"At seven I preached in the new room, which they have just finished at Grimsby. *Sunday, 17th*, at seven in the morning, the house just contained the people. I designed to preach abroad in the afternoon, but the rain drove us into the house again; as many as could crowded in, the rest stood without, though many, I fear, were wet to the skin.

"*Tuesday, 19th*—I preached in a ground adjoining to the House. Towards the conclusion of my sermon, the person with whom I lodged was much

offended at one who sunk down and cried for mercy. Herself dropped down next, and cried as loud as her; so did several others quickly after. When prayer was made for them, one was presently filled with peace and joy in believing. In the morning I left the rest refusing to be comforted, till Christ should be revealed in their hearts."

8.

1759. *Friday, 6th April.*

"We rode over the Wolds (a chain of hills) to North Elkington, three miles from Louth. The congregation was large, notwithstanding the rain, which drove full in our face till we came to Grimsby.

"Sunday 8th. The house was pretty well filled at eight. At two I was obliged to go into the old churchyard, where was such a concourse of people as had hardly ever, they said, been seen at Grimsby before. As many as the room would well contain were present at the watchnight, and at seven in the morning. I then commended them to the grace of God."

9.

1761. *Saturday, 8th August.*

Mr. Wesley records that on this day he preached at Winterton, and at Barrow; and at Grimsby in the evening. Here he also spent the two following

days. The Journals contain no notice beyond this of his visit.

I.O.

1764. *Tuesday, 3rd April.*

“Hence (*i.e.* from Scotter) we rode to Grimsby, once the most dead, now the most lively place in all the county. Here there has been a large and swift increase, both of the Society and hearers, so that the house, though galleries are added, is too small. In the morning, *Wednesday, 4th*, I explained at large the nature of Christian perfection. Many who had doubted of it before were fully satisfied. It remains only to *experience* what we believe. In the evening the mayor and all the gentry of the town were present, and so was our Lord in an uncommon manner. Some dropped down as dead, but after a while rejoiced with joy unspeakable. One was carried away in violent fits. I went to her after the service; she was strongly convulsed from head to foot, and shrieked out in a dreadful manner. The unclean spirit did tear her indeed; but his reign was not long. In the morning both her body and soul were healed, and she acknowledged both the justice and mercy of God.”

I.I.

1766. *Friday, 18th April.*

“I set out for the eastern part of Lincolnshire

and after preaching at Awkborough and Barrow in the way, came the next day to our old friends at Grimsby. It put me in mind of Purrysburg, in Georgia. It was one of the largest towns in the county: it is no bigger than a middling village, containing a small number of half-starved inhabitants, without any trade, either foreign or domestic. But this they have: they love the Gospel—hardly six families excepted. And a large proportion of them have found ‘it is the power of God unto salvation.’”

12.

1768. *Thursday, 14th July.*

Under this date Mr. Wesley writes:—“ I crossed over into Lincolnshire, and, after spending about ten days there, returned by Doncaster, Rotherham, and Sheffield.”

Although Grimsby is not mentioned, it is known that it was one of the places visited at this time.

13.

1770. *Saturday, 14th July.*

“In riding hence (Louth) the heat was as intense as ever; so that I was again tired before we reached Grimsby. But I soon recovered, and preached to a congregation of good old Methodists, on Daniel in the Den of Lions.

"Sun. 15.—I preached at eight, and again at two, and then hastened away to Barrow."

14.

1772. *Wednesday, 22nd July.*

Mr. Wesley preached in Grimsby at this time from "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Christ Jesus," etc. He writes: "Here I was informed of a good man, Thomas Capiter, dying in the full triumph of faith. He was between twenty and thirty years a pillar and an ornament of the Society;—a loss, one would think, not soon to be repaired. But what is too hard for God?"

15.

1774. *Tuesday, 19th July.*

"I preached at Louth about noon, and at Grimsby in the evening."

16.

1779. *Saturday, 3rd July.*

"I reached Grimsby, and found a little trial. In this, and many other parts of the kingdom, those striplings who call themselves Lady Huntingdon's preachers have greatly hindered the work of God. They have neither sense, courage, nor grace to go and beat up the devil's quarters, in any place where Christ has not been named; but wherever

we have entered, as by storm, and gathered a few souls, often at the peril of our lives, they creep in, and by doubtful disputation set every one's sword against his brother. One of these has just crept into Grimsby, and is striving to divide the poor little flock ; but I hope his labour will be in vain, and they will still hold 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.'

17.

1780. *Tuesday, 20th June.*

"After preaching at Tealby, I went on to Grimsby, where I am still more at home than at any place in the east of Lincolnshire ; though scarce any of our first members remain : they are all safe lodged in Abraham's bosom. But here is still a loving people, though a little disturbed by the Calvinists, who seize on every halting soul as their own lawful prey."

18.

1781. *Monday, 2nd July.*

"I preached at Scotter about eight ; at Brigg, at noon ; and in the evening in the old churchyard at Grimsby, to almost all the people of the town, on 'Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.' The late proof of it is in the glorious death of Robert Wilkinson ; and the behaviour of his widow,

'So firm, yet soft, so strong, yet so resigned,'

I believe, will hardly be forgotten by any that were witnesses of it."

Mr. Wilkinson, who was the second preacher in the Grimsby Circuit, had died in December of the preceding year.* He was interred in St. James' churchyard. Upon his tombstone were placed the lines which Charles Wesley composed on the death of Thomas Walsh :—

“ He scorn'd his feeble flesh to spare,
Regardless of its swift decline ;
His single aim, his ceaseless prayer,
To spread the righteousness divine ;
He truly triumphed in the cross,
Its prints as on his body shew'd :
Lavish of life for Jesus' cause,
Whose blood for all so freely flow'd.”

Mr. Wesley preached at Cleethorpes on *Tuesday, 3rd*, and at Grimsby in the evening of that day—taking for his text *Isaiah lxvi. 8, 9*.

“ *Wednesday, 4th.*—I called upon an honest man, and I hope, took him out of the hands of an egregious quack, who was pouring in medicines upon him, for what he called ‘wind in the nerves’! In the evening I preached at Louth, now as quiet as Grimsby : when shall we learn to despair of none ?”

* See “Early Methodist Preachers,” vol. vi., p. 218.

19.

1786. *Wednesday, 21st June.*

"In the evening, the people flocking together on every side, I was constrained to preach in the market-place, where every one behaved well, except the Calvinist preacher."

20.

1788. *Monday, 30th June.*

"About 8, I preached in Scotter ; and found it good to be there. About 11, I preached in Scawby, two miles from Brigg, to a very numerous and serious congregation. In the afternoon, going just by that curious building, Mr. Pelham's Mausoleum, I alighted and took a view of it within and without ; the like, I suppose, is not to be found in England. It is exactly round, fifty-two feet in diameter, and will be sixty-five feet high. The lower part contains, I believe, near a hundred places for the bodies of the Pelham family. (O what a comfort to the departed spirits, that their carcases shall rot above ground !) Over this is to be a chapel. It is computed the whole building will cost sixty thousand pounds. About 5 we came to Grimsby, and the vicar* reading prayers, I preached on the psalm for the day, ' He healeth them that are broken in heart, and

* The Rev. Lindsey Haldenby, B.A.

giveth medicine to heal their sickness.' I think the church is near as large as that at Hull, and it has not been so well filled in the memory of man before. All were seriously attentive; many received the word with joy, and some doubtless will bring forth fruit to perfection.

"*Tues. July 1.*—The vicar again read prayers at 11, and I preached on those words in the second lesson, 'Lord, are there few that be saved?' I spoke as plain as possibly I could, but God only can speak to the heart."

This last entry in the *Journals* respecting Grimsby is interesting, not only as showing Mr. Wesley's indefatigable labours in his old age, but also as indicating with how great respect he was received here, as elsewhere, now that his aims were appreciated and his work respected.

Mr. Wesley met the Society on the Monday evening in the chapel, and gave them an interesting account of the progress of the cause of God in various places. . . . On Tuesday, after bestowing his patriarchal blessing, and bidding adieu to many weeping friends, and to his kind host, Mr. Edward Surfleet, at whose house he was generally entertained in Grimsby, he left the town in the afternoon, and preached in Louth at 6 in the preaching-house, from John v. 8; and also next morning from 1 Cor. x. 12. On the same day (Wed.) at 11 and 6, he preached at Langham Row from Luke xix. 42, and Heb. ii. 3.

Mr. Wesley died 2nd March, 1791, in the eighty-eighth year of his age.

During the fifty years and more of his itinerant life, he travelled about four thousand five hundred miles every year, one year with another, chiefly on horseback. It was not until he was nearly seventy years of age that he took his journeys in a carriage. He was a great reader and a voluminous writer. It is computed that he preached considerably more than forty thousand sermons. His prayer during his old age was, "Lord, let me not live to be useless." In the meetings of the Society, and in the family circle, for three months before his death he invariably closed with the hymn in which this stanza occurs (No. 45):

" O that without a lingering groan
 I may the welcome word receive,
 My body with my charge lay down,
 And cease at once to work and live."

That desire was realised.

CHAPTER III.

THE FIRST METHODIST CHAPEL.

OWING to a variety of causes, but chiefly because of the depressed state of the town, the Society formed in 1743 experienced many fluctuations. Mr. Thos. Meyrick, writing to Mr. Wesley from Epworth in August, 1747, said: "At Grimsby all is peaceable, but I found the Society broken all to pieces ; they had no public or private meetings for almost two months, the leaders having left the town to get work, and there is neither man nor woman left that seem any way qualified for that office. James Skelton I have persuaded to go back again, and Robert Blow, I believe, will return soon. I found much comfort while I stayed, many souls were greatly refreshed, and many came back who had quite left the Society. I intend to go and spend a few days more than the usual time at Grimsby." (*Wes. Mag.* 1798, p. 487.)

For fourteen years the Methodists of Grimsby had no place of meeting to call their own.

The talents and influence of Mr. Thomas Capiter

were of great service to the infant cause. It was largely through his exertions, coupled with those of William Blow, that the first Methodist Chapel (which Mr. Wesley calls "The New Room") was erected. It was built in a yard behind and belonging to William Blow's dwelling, and was entered from the *Bull Ring*. The "New Room" provided accommodation for two hundred persons; it was opened by Mr. Wesley on the occasion of his seventh visit, on Saturday, 16th July, 1757. The list of contributions towards the cost of erection amounted to £65 19s. 3 $\frac{3}{4}$ d. The subscriptions of individual donors were supplemented by contributions from several East Lincolnshire Societies. Ludborough and Binbrook together sent £4 15s. 6d.; Sibsey, £3 3s.; Laceby, £2 11s. 6d.; Coningsby, £2 8s.; Thoresby, £2 2s.; Wrangle, £2 0s. 6d.; Tetney, £1 4s.; Cleethorpes, 12s. 6d.; Toft Newton, 5s. The entire cost of the building was £78 3s. 3d., the items being as follows: Building materials—bricks, tiles, lime, timber, etc., £40 7s.; labour, leading, etc., £28 6s. 4d.; iron and smith's work, £2 13s. 7d.; glazing windows, £3 13s. 6d.; law expenses, £2 12s. 4d.; sundries, 10s. 6d.

Items in the list of payments, such as the following, indicate the difference in cost of labour and of material in Grimsby in 1757 as compared with 1889: *e.g.*, "To two bricklayers and two labourers one week, £1 13s.;" "To three carpenters five days, £1 4s.;"

"To one labourer two days, 3s. ;" "To 700 of bricks, 8s. 2d. ;" "To Mr. Willson for 2,000 of tiles, £4 10s. ;" "To five chaldron of lime, £3."

To us it is a surprising thing that a place of worship, however plain, that was capable of accommodating two hundred people, could have been built for £78. But the value of money was much greater then than now ; wages were lower ; the cost of material and of provisions was smaller. Bricklayers worked for two shillings a day, carpenters and labourers for eighteenpence ; prime beef could often be bought at twopence per pound, fine flour at a shilling a peck, butter at fourpence a pound, and milk at a penny per quart. The lower price of the luxuries of the table of to-day is by no means an equivalent for the increased cost of necessaries.

"The New Room" was licensed and registered in the Consistory Court of the Archdeacon of Lincoln, on October 27th, 1759.* The erection of the "New Room" marks the commencement of a new era in the history of Grimsby Methodism. The Society considerably increased, the zeal of its members was promoted, and several new Societies were formed in neighbouring villages.

A question seems to have arisen as to how often and to what length the preachers should preach.

* See Note B at end.

Mr. Wesley was appealed to, and replied in a characteristic letter, addressed to Mr. Thomas Capiter * :—

“ LONDON, Feb. 6, 1753.

“ MY DEAR BROTHER,—

“ It is a constant rule with us that no preacher should preach above twice a day, unless on Sunday or on some extraordinary time, and then he may preach three times. We know nature cannot long bear the preaching oftener than this ; and therefore, to do it is a degree of self-murder. Those of our preachers who would not follow this advice have all repented when it was too late.

“ I likewise advise all our preachers not to preach above an hour at a time, prayer and all ; and not to speak louder either in preaching or prayer than the number of hearers requires.

“ You will show this to all our preachers, and any that desires it may take a copy of it.

“ I am

“ Your affectionate Brother,

“ J. WESLEY.”

Mr. Thomas Capiter, to whom this letter was sent, joined the Methodist Society in 1748. He was for some time a purser on board of a man-of-war. He afterwards resided at Humberstone as a farmer, and

* This is now in the possession of Mr. Anderson Bates.

subsequently at "The Nuns." He was one of the first local preachers in this part of Lincolnshire, and endured much persecution in his earnest endeavours to promote the cause of Methodism. Mr. Wesley's high appreciation of his personal worth and the value of his assistance to the Society has already appeared in the extract from the *Journals*, under date 22nd July, 1772. It was in February of that year that Mr. Capiter died. He was interred in St. James' Churchyard. A short account of him, written by the Rev. Benjamin Rhodes, appeared in the *Arminian Magazine* for 1785. His son was a pupil at Kingswood School* for about six years, lived to an advanced age in Grimsby, and is still remembered by many persons.

* See *Kingswood Magazine*, Dec. 1889.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW THE WORK SPREAD.

WITH an open field, and "a mind to work," it is no wonder that the early Methodists of these parts saw the good cause advance "by leaps and bounds." The competition now so well known amongst various sections of Christian workers, had no existence a century and a half ago. It frequently happened that one clergyman served several parishes. So recently as 1828, a Lincolnshire pluralist replied, to his bishop, that his parishes were as well served as some others in the diocese, and instanced *Grimsby*, of which he said, "It has service but once a day, and the minister serves Clee also." In the time now under review, there was no overlapping of evangelistic agencies; two or three Methodist chapels in one village, in addition to the parish church, is a circumstance of modern creation. Primitive Methodism occupies no mean position in the county; the Methodist Free Churches have also a considerable place. However much "waste and

friction" is to be deplored, neither "organic union" nor schemes for "mutual withdrawal" appear as yet to have come within the sphere of practical politics.

Lincolnshire is the largest of English counties—Yorkshire alone excepted—embracing an area of 2,762 square miles. Its entire population at the last census (1881) numbered only 469,994;* at the present time it does not exceed half a million. Two of the civil parishes of London, namely Islington and Lambeth, together contain a population greatly in excess of that of the whole of the county of Lincoln.

The *Wesleyan Membership* of this county, however, amounts (March 1889) to 20,687, not including those "on trial" and those in Junior Society Classes. This total has been ascertained by reference to the *Minutes of Conference* (1889), as to circuits which lie wholly within the county, and by correspondence with the respective Superintendent Ministers whose circuits are partly in Lincolnshire and partly in adjoining counties. To this latter class belong the two Lincoln circuits, Gainsborough, Newark, Grantham, Stamford, Crowland, and Wisbeach. In calculating the number of Wesleyan *adherents* it is customary to multiply the Society membership by four. The Wesleyan

* "Census of England and Wales: Preliminary Report, 1881," p. 5.

membership of Lincolnshire represents more than one-twentieth of the entire membership of England and Wales (not including the Isle of Man and the Channel Isles). If the rate of the Lincolnshire membership to the population obtained throughout the other thirty-nine counties of England and the twelve of Wales, instead of reporting a membership of 408,753, English and Welsh Methodism would rejoice in upwards of 1,180,000 members, or two-and-three-quarter times as many as now. Results such as the statistics of Lincolnshire Methodism reveal, are gratifying in the extreme, and bear witness to a spirit of devotion and self-sacrifice for which God is to be praised. If the conditions of work such as our Methodist fathers in this county knew no longer exist, there yet remains a blessed mission of extension and consolidation. We must not rest upon the laurels they won, or dote vaingloriously upon their successes. If opportunities do not exist, it is the business of Christian ingenuity to *create* opportunities.

Comparative statistics apart, "the word of God mightily grew and prevailed" during the latter half of the last century. These early Methodists anticipated the recommendation of the Conference of 1820, as recorded in the Liverpool Minutes. They were not to be "satisfied till every town, village, and hamlet in their respective neighbourhoods had been blessed, so far as they could possibly

accomplish it, with the means of grace and salvation." At Tetney, Cleethorpes, Laceby, Waltham, etc., Methodist preaching had been introduced prior to 1757. Between that date and 1807 Societies were formed at Great Coates, North Thoresby, Keelby, Scartho, Barnoldby-le-Beck, Limber Magna, Holton, Stallingborough, Humberstone, Irby, Rothwell, Caistor, Thorganby, and other places within reach of Grimsby.

From a memoir of Mrs. Snowdon, written by the Rev. W. L. Thornton, M.A., and published in the *Wesleyan Magazine* in 1837, we extract the following :—

"Methodism was introduced into Hull about the year 1746. Elizabeth Blow was one of the earliest members at Grimsby. This humble Christian (whose name it is a happiness to redeem from undue obscurity) had the honour of bringing Methodism to Hull. It was her practice to scatter the seeds of Divine truth beside all waters, and she is justly ranked among the honoured individuals who have sown in tears and reaped in joy. The love of God in Christ Jesus was the most engaging theme of her conversation; and in her frequent visits to Hull she spoke of her spiritual enjoyments, and entreated sinners to seek the mercy which she had found. In transacting the little business that brought her from Lincolnshire, Mrs. Blow was accustomed to call on William Midforth

and his wife, whose residence was near the site of the present Wesley Hall, in Humber Street. The object of her highest anxiety was not forgotten, and her quiet labours of love were sanctified to the awakening of those persons, who soon became happy witnesses of redemption through the blood of Jesus, even the forgiveness of sins."

The work of extending Methodism was also being carried on from other East Lincolnshire towns which had become heads of circuits.

The early Methodists shared with the itinerants the violence of rude mobs and the insults of godless neighbours. At Cleethorpes, Mr. Capiter was tarred and rolled in feathers, and on more than one occasion was put into the stocks, for the crime of preaching. At Waltham, Thomas Carlill was treated in most indecent fashion whilst preaching ; on another occasion some opposers thought to find sport by flinging a hive of bees amongst the worshippers, whilst "certain lewd fellows of the baser sort" disturbed the service by shouting, bawling, and beating old kettles. At North Thoresby the annoyances became so serious that application was made to the Louth magistrates, who gave judgment against the persecutors, and so restored peace. At Humberstone various attempts were made, by bribes and by threats, to induce Joseph Richardson to close his cottage against the preachers, whilst the clergyman tried his influence with the

steward of the estate to get the Methodists evicted, declaring that "They are all crazed together; let them go crazed to the devil—there's no keeping them right." When "Squire" Brackenbury was preaching in the street at Caistor, his brother (Captain Richard Brackenbury) chanced to be in the town with a recruiting party. He joined with others bent on mischief, and employed a drummer and fifer to disturb the congregation. Subsequently he became converted through his brother's instrumentality, was raised to the rank of colonel, and was for many years a class leader and local preacher.

It not infrequently happened that the early Methodists found their greatest opposition from certain "of their own household." One of our first members at Cleethorpes was ill-treated and publicly scandalised by her own husband, until by the grace of God he was brought to repentance and salvation. Well might they sing,—

"Our conquering Lord
Hath prospered His word,
Hath made it prevail,
And mightily shaken the kingdom of hell.
His arm He hath bared,
And a people prepared
His glory to show,
And witness the power of His Passion below."

If such as have been "persecuted for righteousness' sake" are *blessed*, some of the early Grimsby Methodists enjoyed largely that "seal of righteousness."

CHAPTER V.

A LARGER CHAPEL (1808).

THE "New Room," as Mr. Wesley called the first Grimsby chapel—although it had been enlarged by the introduction of galleries—was now too small to meet the requirements of Methodism ; it had also become dilapidated. A new body of trustees was formed, and in 1807 they purchased of the Corporation the fee simple of a piece of land in New Street, upon which a chapel, capable of accommodating nearly five hundred persons, was erected. The trustees were Messrs. T. Hay, A. Hill, G. Laming, J. Marris, E. Odling, J. Plaskitt, J. Plaskitt, jun., N. Saunby, T. Tomlinson, R. Willerton, T. Wintringham. The foundation stone was laid in the spring of 1808 ; the building was dedicated to the service of God on October 2nd of that year. Robert Carr Brackenbury, Esq., of Raithby Hall, conducted the opening services. In 1790 the population of Grimsby amounted to only 982 souls, but since the new Haven had been made (1800), the population

had already begun to grow, and fresh hopes were entertained for the future prosperity of the town. Within a few years every seat in the new chapel was taken, the Society grew in number and in influence, and hundreds of souls were saved. The chapel was enlarged and improved ; and, on July 12th, 1837, the Rev. George B. Macdonald, conducted re-opening services. The Revs. John M'Lean, of Sheffield, and John Rossell, of Louth, continued the services. On January 1st, 1839, a new organ was heard for the first time in a Grimsby chapel. Mrs. Shepherd, Miss Bennett and others were the chief promoters of this excellent innovation. The record of this period has a lesson to teach—namely, that whatever is prudently done to render a place of worship commodious and attractive will have its reward. A marked increase in the Society is observable at this time ; nor is it surprising that such should have been the case,—light, comfort, and good music are all serviceable in their way. It is in vain that we call upon God to prosper Zion unless we are prepared to do all that sanctified common sense suggests to give effect to our prayers. Another item accounting in part for improvement in the cause was the growth of the population, which by 1831 had reached upwards of four thousand.

The first *Sunday School* was commenced by Mr. Joseph Plaskitt in 1808, with but little success, until

Mr. Thomas Wintringham and others joined the movement, three years later ; then its prosperity was assured. The school was held in various places—hired or borrowed—until a schoolroom was erected adjoining New Street Chapel. This was opened by the Rev. Richard Felvus on the 17th July, 1836, and may be regarded as the parent of the many institutions in this town which aim at the religious instruction of the young. In the six Wesleyan Sunday-schools of Grimsby there are now 292 officers and teachers, 2507 scholars ; and 948 members of bands of hope. During the past year £206 was expended upon the maintenance of these schools, whilst £103 7s. 8d. was raised by the Juvenile Missionary Association of the Grimsby schools. Of the 249 young persons meeting in Junior Society classes the greater part will be found to be Sunday scholars. The total number of Sunday scholars in the Wesleyan schools of Great Britain is 928,506, of whom 215,721 are reported as above fifteen years of age.*

In 1835 the "Apollo Lodge," in Lower Burgess Street (then known as Middle Street) was hired by Mr. John Hobson. Here a branch Sunday-school was opened, and Sunday evening services established. Upon the erection of the new Sunday and Day Schools in Victoria Street, in 1858, the school and services were transferred thither.

* See *Minutes of Conference*, 1889, p. 382.

CHAPTER VI.

GRIMSBY PREACHERS: ITINERANT AND LOCAL.

DURING the first few years which followed the introduction of Methodism into Grimsby, Mr. Wesley's preachers who were appointed to "the Yorkshire round" visited this neighbourhood as opportunity permitted. In 1753 Lincolnshire, with a considerable portion of Nottinghamshire attached, was formed into a circuit. The stations of the preachers were not printed in the *Minutes of Conference* at this period; it is not possible, therefore, to give a complete list of those who laboured here prior to 1765. In 1753 we find the names of William Fugill, Thomas Johnson, and James Scholefield associated with Lincolnshire; in 1755 those of Jonathan Maskew and Thomas Mitchell. Thomas Lee, John Hacking, and William Crabb laboured in the county in 1758. In the "Lives of the Early Methodist Preachers" there are occasional references to labours and persecutions in Lincolnshire, particularly in the accounts of Alexander Mather, Thomas

Mitchell, and Thomas Lee. Robert Costerdine, who was stationed in Lincolnshire in 1764, thus describes his first circuit.* The circuit "was then six hundred miles round, and required twelve weeks travelling. Sometimes a mob followed me with volleys of oaths and curses for a mile together. I was thus treated for three months together in Boston, but I was neither afraid nor hurt by them. The Lord gave me strength according to my day, and love that is better felt than expressed. I laboured one quarter in the Epworth side of the Circuit, and then went into the Grimsby side."

At the next Conference Epworth and Grimsby appear as the heads of circuits respectively. For two-and-twenty years they had been in association, but "the time to divide" had now surely come. It was at this Conference that the stations of the preachers were for the first time inserted in the *Minutes*. Thenceforward there is no difficulty in tracing appointments, although from 1766 to 1775 the circuits are designated respectively East and West Lincolnshire.

The following list is taken from the *new* octavo edition of the *Minutes of Conference* :—

1765 Richard Boardman, John Pool, Samuel Woodcock.
1766 Thomas Mitchell, John Ellis, Thomas Carlill.

* *Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine*, 1814.

1767 Thomas Mitchell, John Standring, Lancelot Harrison.

1768 John Ellis, John Peacock, John Pool.

1769 Thomas Johnson, John Pool, William Ellis.

1770 Isaac Brown, George Mowat, Samuel Smith.

1771 Benjamin Rhodes, Lancelot Harrison, Thomas Tennant.

1772 Benjamin Rhodes, Joseph Garnet, Thomas Westall.

1773 Samuel Woodcock, John Peacock, John Wilshaw.

1774 Jeremiah Robertshaw, William Thom, John Peacock.

1775 John Easton, Joseph Harper, Thomas Corbet, John Wittam.

1776 Isaac Brown, Thomas Corbet, Nicholas Manners.

1777 Isaac Brown, Richard Seed, Robert Heywood.

1778 John Peacock, John Morris, William Thom, Robert Empringham.

1779 John Peacock, Daniel Jackson, George Button.

1780 George Shadford, Robert Wilkinson, Robert Heywood, William Warrener.

1781 George Shadford, Thomas Corbet, Joseph Pescod, Charles Atmore.

1782 Thomas Carlill, James Wray, Samuel Botts, Thomas Wride.

1783 Thomas Carlill, Robert Scott, Samuel Botts, Joseph Harper.

1784 William Dufton, James Watson, Robert Scott,
John Watson, jun.

1785 William Dufton, George Holder, Lancelot
Harrison, Alexander Kilham.
(*Horncastle Circuit formed 1786.*)

1786 Lancelot Harrison, James Wray.

1787 Thomas Longley, William Fish.

1788 Thomas Longley, George Phillips.

1789 William Saunders, Robert Scott, John Riles.

1790 Jasper Robinson, John Peacock, James Evans.

1791 Jasper Robinson, George Mowatt, George
Sargent.

1792 John King, George Mowatt, George Sargent.

1793 John King, Thomas Gill, Francis West.

1794 James Hall, William Hunter, jun., Leonard
Ledbrook.

1795 James Hall, Thomas Vasey, William Harri-
son, sen.

(*Barrow Circuit formed 1796; Winterton made the
head in 1804, and Barton in 1817.*)

1796 Thomas Vasey, John Nelson, Thomas Edman.

1797 William Saunderson, Robert Smith, sen.,
Richard Thompson.

1798 William Saunderson, John Atkins, Joseph
Brookhouse, William Atherton; T. Carlill,
Supernumerary.
(*Louth Circuit formed 1799.*)

1799 John C. Leppington, John Atkins; T. Carlill,
Supernumerary.

1800 George Sykes, Joseph Brookhouse, Benjamin Gregory.

1801 George Sykes, John Poole, Zech. Taft.

1802 Thomas Rogerson, Diggory Joll, John Story.

1803 Thomas Rogerson, John Wittam, Philip Garrett.

1804 Edward Towler, Philip Garrett, John Brownlass.

1805 Martin Vaughan, Stephen Butler, John Bedford.

1806 Martin Vaughan, James Hopewell, Michael Cousin.

1807 Thomas Simmonite, James Hopewell, William Scott.

1808 Thomas Simmonite, John Aslin, Joseph Mann.

1809 Thomas Rought, John Aslin, Joseph Pretty.

1810 Thomas Rought, Lewis Andrews, Jarvis Shaw.

1811 Thomas Tattershall, William Scholefield, George Wilson.

1812 James Waller, Abraham Crabtree, Jonathan Porter.

(Market Rasen Circuit formed 1813.)

1813 James Waller, Samuel Ward.

1814 } John Furness, Thomas Fearnley.

1815 } John Aslin, Benjamin Gregory.

1816 Martin Vaughan, Daniel Jackson, jun.

1817 Martin Vaughan, Robert Ramm.

1818 } John Aslin, Benjamin Gregory.

1819 }

1820 } Samuel Sugden, Thomas Hall.
1821 }
1822 } Robert Crowther, James Baker ; M. Vaughan,
1823 } *Supernumerary.*
1824 } John Nicholson, Anthony Trifflit.
1825 }
1826 } Thomas Padman, Thomas Eckersley.
1827 }
1828 Thomas Padman, John Piggott.
1829 } James Etchells, John Piggott ; James Hopewell,
1830 } *Supernumerary.*
1831 Cuthbert Whiteside, Robert Ramm.
1832 Francis Derry, Robert Ramm.
1833 Francis Derry, Ambrose Freeman.
1834 } Richard Wintle, Ambrose Freeman ; James
1835 } Hopewell, *Supernumerary* (1835—1846).
1836 } John Jones (1), Joshua Hocken.
1837 }
1838 Joshua Hocken, Wm. Pearson, jun., Joseph
Hudson.
1839 John Nowell, Wm. Pearson, jun., Thomas
Denham.
1840 } John Nowell, William Dawson, Joshua
1841 } Priestley.
1842 John Stephenson, William Dawson, Joshua
Priestley.
1843 } John Stephenson, John Knowles (2), John
1844 } Crawshaw.
1845 James Loutit, Henry D. Lowe, John Craw-

shaw ; Thomas Padman, Richard Allen,
Supernumeraries.

1846 James Loutit, Henry D. Lowe, Henry
 Richardson.

1847 James Loutit, Henry Richardson, William J.
 Skidmore.

1848 } Benjamin Firth, Robert Dugdale, William

1849 } J. Skidmore, George Scott (2).

1850 Benjamin Firth, Robert Dugdale, Henry
 Hastling, George Scott (2) ; Edward
 Abraham, *Supernumerary* (1849—1850).

1851 } Samuel Broadbent, Nathan Rouse, Henry

1852 } Hastling, Edmund Knaggs.

1853 Samuel Broadbent, Peter C. Horton, Nathan
 Rouse, Edmund Knaggs.

1854 } Peter C. Horton, Thomas Thompson, M.A.,

1855 } Joseph Heaton, Ebenezer R. Talbot, M.A.

1856 John E. Coulson, Amos Learoyd, Thomas
 Thompson, M.A., Joseph Heaton.

1857 John E. Coulson, W. H. Clarkson, Geo. B.
 Mellor, Wm. Allen (3).

1858 J. E. Coulson, W. H. Clarkson, Thomas
 Hughes, George B. Mellor.

1859 William H. Clarkson, Thomas Hughes, Geo. B.
 Mellor, Richard Martin, John T. Harwood.

1860 Thomas A. Rayner, Thomas Hughes, Richard
 Martin, Marshall Randles, George Swiden-
 bank.

1861 Thomas A. Rayner, Richard Martin, William

Wilson (4), Marshall Randles, Joseph Milligan.

1862 Thomas A. Rayner, Joseph B. West, William Wilson (4), Marshall Randles, Joseph Milligan.

1863 Charles Carter, Joseph B. West, Wm. Wilson, George Follows, Walter Briscombe.

1864 Charles Carter, Joseph B. West, Geo. Rowe, Samuel Wray, W. Briscombe.

1865 Charles Carter, Geo. Rowe, S. Wray, John I. Britten, Edwin Dixon.

1866 James Carr, Geo. Rowe, S. Wray, J. I. Britten, Edwin Dixon.

1867 Jas. Carr, W. T. Nelson, F. C. Haime, J. I. Britten, Wm. Cullum.

(*Grimsby [Caistor & Laceby] formed 1868.*)

1868 James Carr, William T. Nelson, Frederick C. Haime.

1869 James Little, William T. Nelson, Wesley Brunyate.

1870 James Little, Wesley Brunyate, Amos White.

1871 George Hughes, Wesley Brunyate, Amos White; Jas. Little, *Supernumerary* (1871-77).

1872 George Hughes, Amos White, Richard Butterworth.

1873 } Samuel Simpson (A), Richard Butterworth,

1874 } John Taylor (A), Josiah E. Whydale.

1875 Samuel Simpson (A), Robert Posnett, W. Davies Williams, Joel Mallinson.

1876 } Robert Posnett, W. Davies Williams, William
 1877 } H. Groves, M.A., Stephen Parkes.
 1878 Edward Workman, George Barlow, William
 H. Groves, M.A., Stephen Parkes.
 1879 } Edward Workman, George Barlow, Henry
 1880 } Bone, George Smith (E).
 1881 James J. Prescott, Jas. R. Sawtell, Henry
 Bone, Geo. Smith (E).
 1882 James J. Prescott, Jas. R. Sawtell, Wm.
 Kendrew, Thos. F. Lockyer, B.A. ; John
 Rossell, *Supernumerary* (1882-89), Ed.
 Lockyer, *Supernumerary* (1882-84).
 1883 James J. Prescott, Jas. R. Sawtell, Wm.
 Kendrew, T. F. Lockyer, B.A. ; Charles
 Carter, *Supernumerary* (1883-84).
 1884 Francis Hewitt, James P. Keeley, Wm.
 Kendrew, T. F. Lockyer, B.A. ; Jas. Nance,
 Supernumerary.
 1885 } Francis Hewitt, Jas. P. Keeley, Robt. Odery,
 1886 } W. Cornelius Jones.
 1887 John A. B. Harry, George Lester, Robt. Odery,
 W. Cornelius Jones.
 1888 } John A. B. Harry, George Lester, Sampson
 1889 } Nicholls, Wm. George ; Wm. Shaw, *Super-*
 numerary (1889).

It would be invidious to select for special mention the names of any ministers who are still living ; many such are referred to in these pages in connection with circuit extension. Amongst the departed are

certain to whose names special interest attaches for the work they did here and in other parts of the Connexion. To some such a brief allusion may be made.

Richard Boardman. He was the first of two preachers to volunteer for America (1769). A collection was made in the Conference, out of which the passage-money of the volunteers was paid, and £50 sent "as a token of love to the brethren in New York," who were in difficulties touching their new chapel. He died in America in 1783.

Benjamin Rhodes. He wrote the hymns in our collection beginning "My heart and voice I raise," and "Jerusalem divine" (No. 731); they formed part of his "Poem on the Messiah." He died at Margate in 1815, aged 72.

Charles Atmore. Grimsby—which then (1781) included almost the whole of East Lincolnshire—was his first circuit. He was a popular and useful preacher, the author of "The Methodist Memorial" and other works. In 1811 he was elected President of the Conference. This Conference is memorable as having given its sanction to the purchase of Woodhouse Grove ("Myles' Chron. Hist." p. 353). In 1813 he preached in connection with the laying of the foundation stone of Waltham Street Chapel, Hull, and published the sermon. He died in London in 1826, in the 67th year of his age.

Thomas Vasey. He received episcopal ordination in America, and for some time held a curacy in England. For fifteen years he was appointed to read prayers at City Road Chapel, London. He died suddenly at Leeds in 1826, aged 81.

William Atherton. A powerful preacher, published an abridged "Life of Lady Maxwell," some sermons, and an ordination charge; President of the Conference 1846; died in 1850.

John Crosby Leppington. He was a man of considerable culture, and an effective preacher. Entered the itinerant work in 1795, married a daughter of Hildyard Marshall, Esq., of this town, surgeon; died at Louth in 1833, and rests—his wife also—in St. James' churchyard. His son—also named John Crosby—was for twenty-seven years in the Wesleyan ministry, published several able works on the Anglican controversy, and made some excellent contributions to our Connexional magazines. His sermon preached in Huddersfield at the time of Her Majesty's coronation, and entitled "Christian Loyalty,"* is a masterpiece—elegant in its diction, noble as to its sentiments of loyalty and patriotism, and strong in its evangelical tone. Of his other son it is unnecessary to speak to such as have known Grimsby for the last half-century and more.

* *Wesleyan Magazine*, 1839, p. 273.

The names of Benjamin Gregory, Philip Garrett, Peter C. Horton, Joshua Priestley, Samuel Broadbent, (Dr.) John Knowles, are household words in the Connexion. Amongst those who laboured in this circuit during the half-century now closing, were Nathan Rouse—a literary man, and an excellent preacher, cultured and lovable. He imbibed certain theological notions which resulted in his retirement from our ranks. John E. Coulson—a pattern of ministerial fidelity and diligence, under whose administration the circuit greatly prospered. Thomas Hughes—kind, generous, philosophic, and conscientious, notwithstanding that he came into collision with the Conference through his ill-advised procedure touching our class-meeting system. George Scott—who rejoiced over trophies of grace won amongst dock-navvies and others. Charles Carter—“true as steel,” and as devoted as true, who rests in our cemetery. The name of Edmund Knaggs is an inspiration to many. The memory of George Rowe, Samuel Wray, James Rio Sawtell, and James Percy Keeley, cannot but be cherished.

Amongst those who in former times went from the Grimsby circuit into the itinerancy were Thomas Carlill, William Fish, (Dr.) John Beecham, and William Wilkinson. In later years the following, with others, have been recommended by this Quarterly Meeting:—James H. Broadbent, B.A., William Charles Williams, William Scarborough, William

John Marris, Toft Walker Cook, William Martin, George Marris, C. de Putron Gliddon, William Henry Gibbs. Only certain of these were, however, natives of Grimsby. Grimsby circuit has no occasion to be ashamed of any whose entrance into the ranks of our ministry it has initiated.

The *Local Preachers* of this circuit constitute a large and invaluable body of workers. To their zeal, and to their devotion to their high calling, the circuit owes not a little of its past development and present strength. Amongst the roll of departed worthies have been men "of renown";* such also were Messrs. Stephen Noddall, George Lamming, John Marris, "Father" Bellamy, and Joseph his son, George Marris, Joseph Sadler, John Hay, John Coatsworth, Thomas Stephenson (Borough Treasurer), who was suddenly called to his reward on the 11th January, 1889; and many more whose memory is lovingly cherished in town and country.

Fifty years ago the local preachers of the Grimsby circuit were : M. Cunningham, J. Marris, C. Hewson, T. Bellamy, J. Temple, W. Temple, E. Blow, J. Bellamy, D. Taylor, J. Forman, R. Poxon, E. Brown, E. Turner, J. Read, J. Askey, G. Marris, J. Lingard, P. Wigelsworth, J. Miller, H. Smith, P. Lessing, U. Wilson, J. Carter, W. Rhodes, J. Mells, J. Twigg,

* To several special reference is made in various parts of this volume.

S. Howden, C. Brown, J. Ellis, J. Tyler, W. Beaumont, J. Allison, J. Salmon, J. Davidson; *On trial*: S. Smethurst, R. Wilkinson, J. Stark, J. Hewson. "One generation shall praise Thy works to another, and shall declare Thy mighty acts."

The following are the names of Local Preachers upon the circuit plan, beginning 12th January, 1890:—

B. WALL,	G. PICKERING,	W. POTTS,
J. APPLEYARD (1),	E. MOULD,	J. GARTON,
J. APPLEYARD (2),	J. ASHMORE,	T. SAVAGE,
E. PEARSON,	R. ROBINSON,	W. WARD,
R. SOUTHERN,	J. H. WHITE,	A. BELL,
W. VESSEY,	E. MARKHAM,	W. B. DAVIDSON,
H. WALLER,	G. SHAW,	H. A. ROOKE,
J. WHITELEY,	W. INGHAM,	J. INGHAM,
J. CHAPMAN,	J. R. CLIFF,	H. E. PLUMTREE,
J. W. C. ROWE,	S. F. BENTON,	G. H. TOWNSEND.
J. K. RIGGALL,	A. KNOTT,	
J. CHATBURN,	J. SEARLE,	<i>On trial.</i>
J. K. CAPES,	R. BARNABY,	W. FOX,
C. E. PHILLIPSON,	J. C. JEPSON,	F. WILLMER.
F. PORTER,	T. KENDALL,	

The circuit has also been indebted to the labours of evangelists, whose toil has frequently resulted in great ingatherings to our several Societies.

CHAPTER VII.

TOWN SOCIETIES.

GEORGE STREET (1847).

THE Haven Company had become merged in the Manchester, Sheffield, and Lincolnshire Railway Company, and arrangements for the construction of extensive docks were in a forward state. "Hope deferred" had made many a "heart sick," but now there was a definite prospect of prosperity for Grimsby. New Street Chapel, with all the "great improvements" that had been effected in it, could no longer accommodate the congregation that assembled, or duly represent Methodism in a town which promised shortly to become a flourishing seaport. Accordingly, the Wesleyans of 1846 resolved to arise and build a large chapel; the designs were prepared by Mr. A. Trimen. The superintendent minister of that day—the Rev. James Loutit—lent a powerful aid to the project, if, indeed, its initiation was not largely due to his sagacious energy. A subscription list was opened, and a series of meetings organised in

aid of the scheme to erect in George Street a handsome and commodious chapel. Not only was the town canvassed in districts, but meetings to assist the effort were held at Laceby, Caistor, Beelsby, Cleethorpes, Tetney, North Thoresby, Keelby, Ashby, Waltham, Humberstone, Brigsley, Holton, Rothwell, Irby, Scartho, and Thorganby. The subscription list—which contains no less than 957 items, varying in amount from donations of £200 to gifts of sixpences—realised £2717 18s. 8d. To this was added the proceeds of sale of the New Street property, of foundation stone laying, opening services, etc., etc., bringing up the total contributions towards the erection of the chapel to about £4500. What associations an examination of this subscription list calls up! How few of those who contributed to the erection of George Street are alive and remain! Some names have quite disappeared from Grimsby Methodism; but others are represented by active and useful Wesleyans of to-day in Grimsby and in “the regions round about.”

The dedicatory services were conducted with great rejoicing, several of the most prominent ministers of the Connexion and of other Nonconformist churches taking part therein. Can anything be better than that the circular announcing the series of services should here be reproduced *in extenso*?—

OPENING SERVICES
OF THE
NEW WESLEYAN CHAPEL,
GRIMSBY.

THE PUBLIC ARE MOST RESPECTFULLY INFORMED THAT THE ENTIRE SERVICES WILL BE HELD AS FOLLOW:

On FRIDAY, APRIL 2nd, 1847,

SERMONS

Will be preached in the Forenoon at HALF-PAST TEN, and in the Evening at SIX, by The REV. JOHN LOMAS, *of London*; and in the Afternoon at HALF-PAST Two o'clock, by The REV. W. VEVERS, *of Hull*.

On SUNDAY, April 4th,

In the Forenoon at HALF-PAST TEN, and in the Evening at SIX, by The REV. A. E. FARRAR, *of Sheffield*; and in the Afternoon at Two o'clock, by The REV. H. D. LOWE.

On THURSDAY, April 8th,

In the Afternoon at HALF-PAST Two, and in the Evening at SIX, by The REV. ROBERT NEWTON, D.D.

On SUNDAY, April 11th,

In the Forenoon, at HALF-PAST TEN, and in the Evening at SIX, by The REV. J. DOBBIN, LL.D., *of Trinity College, Dublin*; and in the Afternoon, at Two o'clock, by The REV. WILLIAM DAWSON.

On TUESDAY, April 13th,

In the Evening at HALF-PAST SIX o'clock, by The REV. JAMES SHERMAN, *of Surrey Chapel, London*.

On SUNDAY, April 18th,

In the Morning at HALF-PAST TEN, and in the Evening at SIX, by The REV. DR. BEAUMONT, *of London*; and in the Afternoon at Two o'clock, by The REV. JAMES LOUTIT.

N.B. DINNER & TEA in the School-rooms, on FRIDAY, the 2ND, and TEA on THURSDAY, the 8TH of APRIL. Dinner Tickets, *Two Shillings*—Tea Tickets, *One Shilling* each. *Dinner and Tea Ticket*, on the 2ND of APRIL, *Two Shillings and Sixpence*.

 A Collection at the close of each Service on behalf of the Building Fund.

Our fathers evidently thought it no evil thing to associate with their religious festivities a becoming provision for gastronomic instincts ; and have we failed to profit by their example ? George Street worthily maintains its prestige, and by reason of the erection of attractive residences within easy reach of it, shows no signs of sharing the calamities which have befallen "the circuit chapel" in some towns. The present organ was introduced in April 1864. During the superintendency of the Rev. Edward Workman, a united Circuit effort (concluded January 1879) resulted in freeing George Street chapel from debt, along with those of Duncombe Street, Cleethorpes, Stallingborough, and North Thoresby, and thus disposed of liabilities amounting to £2333.

A handsome block of buildings adjoining the chapel, with entrances from Osborne Street, was erected in 1884, at a cost of £3000. The foundation stone was laid by Hildyard Marshall Leppington, Esq., J.P., surgeon, on June 4th. The premises include schoolrooms, class-rooms, ladies' rooms, etc.

By the will of Mrs. Abigail Hannah, who died in May 1808, the interest of £100 (less duty and expenses) is left "for distribution amongst the poor members of the Grimsby Methodist Society." This is disbursed through the several leaders' meetings of the town.

There are eighteen Society classes, including two for juniors ; the membership in March 1889

was 446, with 53 junior members. The Sunday-school reports 508 scholars, under the care of 62 officers and teachers; the band of hope numbers 120. A network of agencies of various kinds is associated with the operations of the church.

VICTORIA SCHOOLS (1858).

A Wesleyan day-school was commenced about 1849, in the George Street schoolroom; this did not long continue, and was but little successful. In 1851 the committee transferred the school to the upper room of "Apollo Lodge," in Lower Burgess Street, with Mr. James Whiteley as the first master. Shortly afterwards an infants' department was added, under the charge of Mrs. Whiteley. The enterprise of the Rev. John E. Coulson resulted in "a new departure." The foundation stones of commodious schools in Victoria Street were laid by Mr. John Hobson, whilst the Hull District Committee was in session in this town, in May 1857. After a breakfast and public meeting, held at George Street, the guests and the office-bearers of the circuit formed into procession, and marched to assist at the ceremony; the chairman of the district—the Rev. Joseph Hargreaves—gave an address. The site was secured upon advantageous terms through the generosity of Messrs. Henry and Joseph Bennett; the builders' contract was for £2098; other charges brought up the total to £2242. A grant of £1050 was received

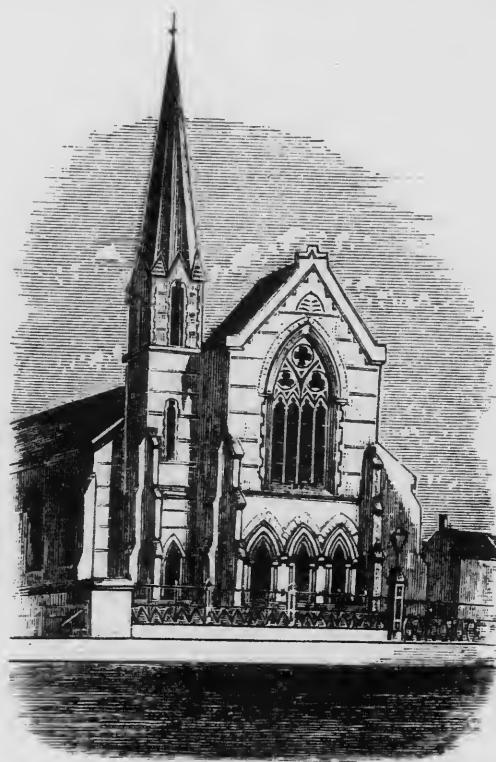
from H.M. Committee of Council, and £70 from the Wesleyan Education Committee. Messrs. Bellamy & Hardy (Lincoln) were the architects ; the builder—Mr. Glover—was also of Lincoln. The schools were formally opened, free of debt, by a public meeting, held on 3rd January, 1858, over which Thomas Farmer, Esq., of Gunnersbury, presided. The Rev. John Scott, of Westminster, was amongst the speakers. The scholars were received on 12th January. There are at present 482 scholars on the day-school books ; the average attendance for the last school year was 372 ; the Government grant for the year amounted to £331 12s. 6d.

Upon the opening of the Victoria Schools, the "Apollo Lodge" was abandoned ; the Sunday-school and various services were transferred to the new premises, until the erection of Victoria Chapel. A Sunday-school is still held at the Victoria Street Schools. There are 200 scholars on the books, with 30 officers and teachers ; the band of hope reports a membership of 85.

VICTORIA CHAPEL (1860).

The first pile of many thousands used in the construction of Grimsby docks was driven in 1846 ; on 18th April, 1849, the foundation stone of the Royal Dock was laid by H.R.H. the Prince Consort ; on 27th May, 1852, the *City of Norwich* steamed out, bearing a cargo of cotton for Hamburg. Her

Majesty Queen Victoria inspected the new dock in October 1854, and named it "The Royal." The construction of other docks, "the pontoon," and various port accessories followed. One result of all



VICTORIA CHAPEL.

this extension was a rapid and abnormal increase of population in the north-east quarter. With that came the necessity for the erection of a second chapel. Designs were prepared by Messrs. Bellamy & Hardy, and the work was executed by Mr. John Brown, Grimsby; the cost of the building was about £3000.

It was opened for divine worship on Thursday, 27th September, 1860, by the Revs. George B. Macdonald and Luke H. Wiseman; Mr. Macdonald also preached in George Street Chapel in the evening. The dedicatory services were conducted by the Revs. F. A. West, J. E. Coulson, W. M. Punshon, Dr. Hannah, James Loutit, S. D. Waddy, S. M'Aulay, George Scott, James Sherman, and the Revs. T. A. Rayner, Thomas Hughes, and Richard Martin, ministers of the circuit. Subsequently galleries were put in, and the present schoolroom and vestries added. Reopening services were conducted on Wednesday, 22nd November, 1865, by the Rev. Henry Pollinger, of Sheffield, and were continued by the Revs. George Scott, James Parsons of York, and Luke Tyreman of London. A bazaar was organised with great success. The organ was introduced in 1867. The thanks of the trustees have been presented on several occasions to their co-trustee, Joseph Bennett, Esq., J.P., for special services rendered to the trust estate. Mr. Charles J. Hay acted as secretary to the trust for sixteen years, and was succeeded in that office in 1876 by Mr. Charles Watmough, whose father was trustees' treasurer until March 1882, when failing health led him to resign the office. An additional piece of land was secured in the rear of the trust premises in 1882. In connection with the erection of "Victoria," Mr. John Goddard began that series of valuable services

to Methodist chapel extension in this circuit with which his name is gratefully associated.

Mr. Charles Bell, F.R.I.B.A., is now preparing plans and specifications for much needed improvements. These include a church-room, additional class-rooms, etc., and the rearrangement of the pulpit and pews. It is estimated that the work will involve an outlay of about £700, towards which upwards of £400 has been already raised, chiefly by a bazaar held in November last.

There are fifteen Society classes, of which two are for juniors. Number of members, 189, with 45 juniors. The Sunday-school reports 253 scholars and 47 officers and teachers ; there are 120 members in the band of hope.

DUNCOMBE STREET.

“Who hath despised the day of small things ?” The large and flourishing cause at Duncombe Street had but a humble beginning. A few friends concerned for the religious improvement of the rapidly growing population in the East Marsh commenced a preaching service in a house ; and, in September 1867, a Sunday-school and an evening service in a joiner’s shop, not far from the site of the present chapel. The number of scholars soon reached 120, and over 80 adults were sometimes crowded into the small and inconvenient room. Messrs. William Jackson, Shadlock, and others were aided

by the circuit ministers—notably the Rev. Frederick C. Haime—and Mr. N. Beck, who was employed as a town missionary. In December 1867 the Circuit Home Missionary Committee, "after long and anxious deliberation," resolved to appeal to the Wesleyans of Grimsby with a view to the erection of a school-chapel. The response was such as to encourage the commencement of a scheme, and freehold land in Duncombe Street was purchased. The foundation stone of the school-chapel—now used as the large schoolroom—was laid by William Coates, Esq., on 22nd April, 1868. The encouraging growth of the society and school rendered necessary the erection of a commodious chapel. The first meeting convened to promote this object met on the 15th March, 1872; a building committee was formed, and arrangements were made for securing promises towards the cost of erection. Designs prepared by Mr. Charles Bell, of London, for a chapel to seat 970 persons, were accepted, with certain modifications. The contractors were Messrs. Enderby & Sons. William Grange, Esq., Town Clerk, laid the foundation stone on 24th September, 1872. The chapel was opened for divine worship on Tuesday, 22nd July, 1873, by the Rev. Gervase Smith, M.A. There was a public tea in the Town Hall, and an evening meeting, in which the Revs. G. Smith, M.A., F. C. Haime, R. W. Starr and others took part. The dedicatory services were continued

by the Revs. F. C. Haime, Dr. Lyth, Wesley Brunyate, Dr. Jobson, W. O. Simpson, George T. Perks, M.A., and Richard Roberts. Several additions have been made to the premises from time to time, chief amongst which are the class-rooms, the foundation stone of which was laid on 28th June, 1880, by Mrs. William Jackson, and the infant schools, of which Mr. Alderman Jackson laid the foundation stone on 23rd February, 1885.

At the Conference of 1873 a home missionary was appointed to the circuit, with special reference to the development of this cause. At the district meeting of 1875 the superintendent, Rev. Samuel Simpson, was able to report thus : "The mission work in connection with the Duncombe Street Chapel has been carried on with zeal, energy and devotion, and God has graciously given us His blessing. Two years since we had 7 classes and 132 members ; now we have 15 classes and 277 members."

From the commencement of the cause here the Society has been buoyant and vigorous ; the various departments of church work have been well sustained. There are 21 Society classes, two of which are for juniors. The membership numbers 390, with 63 juniors. There are 650 scholars in the Sunday-schools, with 52 officers and teachers. The band of hope reports 250 members, so that the Sunday-school and the band of hope at Duncombe Street are the largest in the circuit.

ARLINGTON STREET.

Wesleyan Methodism had no cause in New Clee prior to 1875. At that time a Sunday evening service was commenced in the house of Mr. Grainger, in Thorold Street. The congregations increasing, the preaching was removed to Mr. K. V. Osmond's schoolroom in Hamilton Street. A society class was formed, but progress was impeded for want of suitable premises for Sunday-school and Society purposes. A large plot of leasehold land was secured at the junction of Hilda Street and Arlington Street, upon which a good school-chapel was erected in the following year; the foundation stone was laid by S. Grant, Esq., on 14th November, 1887. The opening services were conducted in April 1878, by three former ministers—the Revs. Marshall Randles, Frederick C. Haime, and William Cullum. The erection of the school-chapel was largely due to the indefatigable exertions of the Rev. W. Davies Williams. A Sunday-school was commenced on the first Sunday in May 1878; 28 children attended in the morning, and 45 in the afternoon of the opening day. Now the school reports 431 scholars, with 42 officers and teachers; there are 137 members in the band of hope. There are 7 Society classes, and 3 for juniors; the membership amounts to 115, with 30 in Junior Society classes. The "Mission Band and Benevolent Society" is doing good work. The results already achieved at Arlington Street give promise of still greater success

when the generous sagacity of Grimsby Methodism shall have placed upon the vacant land a chapel such as is needed in this rapidly increasing part of the extended borough. Towards that consummation Arlington Street Wesleyans look with longing eyes and eager hearts. In the meantime they are making some effort to establish their claim upon the consideration of the circuit.

SOUTH PARADE.

For some time prior to the erection of the chapel in the West Marsh, Wesleyan services were held in the Scandinavian church, in Chapman Street. On 10th May, 1881, the foundation stone of the chapel was laid by Henry Bennett, Esq., J.P.—the present mayor of Grimsby—who placed on the stone a donation of £300. Mr. Charles Bell was the architect; the contractors were Messrs. Riggall & Hewins, of Grimsby. The chief benefactions were received from Messrs. W. Grange, C. A. Marshall, J.P. ; E. L. Grange, M.A. ; A. Marshall, J.P. ; F. Sowerby, J. K. Riggall, C. Coates, W. Hall, T. Stephenson, J. Smethurst, and Mesdames C. A. Marshall and James Bennett. The Rev. Dr. Osborn preached the opening sermon on 24th November, 1881 ; then followed a tea and public meeting at George Street. Dedicatory services were continued by the Revs. R. Roberts, F. W. Macdonald, C. Garrett, and John Bond. Mr. Charles A. Marshall, J.P., acted as trea-

surer to the building fund, and Messrs. G. Stampe and Joseph Smethurst as secretaries. The total cost of erection, fencing, etc., amounted to nearly £3000, besides articles of church furniture contributed by various friends. A temporary arrangement has been made by means of a partition wall placed across the chapel at about two-thirds of its length, so as to secure schoolrooms and vestries. Provision is made for some part of the rapidly increasing school by the hire of the neighbouring Board School. The complete scheme contemplates a chapel to seat a thousand persons, with schools, etc., at the side, where land has been secured for the purpose. A successful sale of work, recently held, has placed the current account of the trust in a satisfactory position, besides providing certain necessities for various departments of our work.

The Society numbers 189, with 58 in junior classes; there are 478 Sunday-scholars, and 57 officers and teachers. The band of hope reports 236 members.

The total number of members in the Town Societies in March 1889, was 1329, with 25 on trial, and 249 in junior society classes. The estimated value of Wesleyan trust properties in the town is £16,490.

CHAPTER VIII.

COUNTRY SOCIETIES.

CLEETHORPES.



CLEETHORPES CHAPEL.

METHODISM had its beginning here in a small Society which was formed at Thrumscoë about 1745. For some ten years the class meetings were held—occasional preaching services also—in the house of Mrs. Allison, “a pious, benevolent and use-

ful person.” From 1758 to 1762 the meetings were held in William Dean’s dwelling at High Thorpe, and thenceforward in the more eligible

house of Mrs. Bell, until her marriage with Mr. William Robinson. He licensed his house for preaching, in order to secure protection against the annoyance of foolish opposers, who frequently disturbed the services. Mr. Robinson had joined the Methodist Society in 1752, prior to his residence at Cleethorpes. He diligently strove to maintain the cause, was "a holy and upright man," one of the first class leaders in this Society, and hospitably entertained the preachers. He died in 1814. The *Wesleyan Magazine* of 1815 (p. 884) contains an interesting memoir of this excellent man. In the same volume (p. 401) there appears "Some Account of the Life and Death of Amos Appleyard, of Cleathorpe," written in admirable style and taste by Mr. Benjamin Chapman. Mr. Appleyard was a man of much originality of character, and was enthusiastically attached to the cause of Methodism. He died 9th June, 1813; the Rev. Abraham Crabtree preached his funeral sermon, in the open air, on the following Sunday. Revivals of religion were of frequent occurrence in Cleethorpes in olden time. Interesting notices of them appear in a brief account (manuscript) prepared in 1837 by Benjamin Taylor. In it are names of persons who in successive revivals were brought to God; many of their descendants are to be found in the Society of to-day.

The Rev. John Wesley preached at Cleethorpes on the occasion of his eighteenth visit to Grimsby. He

thus records the incident : “ *Tuesday, 3rd July, 1781 ;* “ I preached at Claythorpe (Cleethorpes), three miles from Grimsby. Here, likewise, there has been an outpouring of the Spirit. I was reminded here of what I saw at Cardiff almost forty years ago. I could not go into any of the little houses, but presently it was filled with people, and I was constrained to pray with them in every house, or they would not be satisfied. Several of these are clearly renewed in love, and give a plain, scriptural account of their experience, and there is scarce a house in the village wherein there is not one or more earnestly athirst for salvation.”

Mr. Wesley’s text on this occasion was : “ Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free” (Gal. v. 1). The first chapel was built in 1802, upon land granted by Mr. B. Chapman. It stood in Chapel Yard, and cost £100, towards which £80 was raised by collections and subscriptions. The Rev. Thomas Rogerson preached the opening sermon ; the Revs. Diggory Joll and John Story also took part in the first services. In 1821 a larger chapel was built in High Street ; it cost £300, and £30 more was paid for the land. Opening services were conducted by the Revs. George Highfield and Joshua Marsden ; the collections amounted to £20. This, with subscriptions, sale of old chapel, etc., only brought up the total amount raised at time of erection to £122 4s. A Sunday-school was commenced in

1826, to which in 1830 a library was attached. In 1848 a still larger chapel was erected in Church Road —now St. Peter's Road—at a cost of about £1050. This structure did service for a longer period than either of its predecessors. But, notwithstanding that it had been enlarged, and that blessed memories attached to it, it was judged to be inadequate to the requirements and prospects of Wesleyan Methodism in Cleethorpes ; it was therefore taken down in 1848, to be superseded by the present admirably arranged and commodious premises. The school-room was first built, and here the services, etc., were held while the chapel was in course of erection. The memorial stone was laid on 22nd September, 1884, by John Wintringham, Esq., of The Abbey, Grimsby. The first service held in the chapel was conducted by the Rev. John H. Sholl, on Midsummer Day, 1885. In the evening a public meeting was held, Henry J. Atkinson, Esq., M.P., presiding. The Rev. Richard Green, chairman of the district, the Revs. John Rossall, F. Hewitt, J. P. Keeley, W. Kendrew, T. F. Lockyer, B.A., Mr. C. Bell, and others, also took part. The architect was Mr. Charles Bell, of London ; the contractors Messrs. Thompson & Sons, of Louth ; Mr. John Goddard acted as clerk of the works. The chapel provides 1041 sittings. The total cost has been about £6000. The conditions of the Chapel Committee have been complied with, and three half-yearly instalments of the loan have been repaid.

The principal donors have been Messrs. J. S. Barnaby, T. Bratley, W. Hall, G. Jennings, J. R. Mackrill, C. A. Marshall, J.P., A. Osborne, R. Osborne, J. K. Riggall, G. Smith, T. Willerton, M. Wright, and a lady friend. The ladies of the congregation have materially helped the undertaking by a bazaar and sales of work; whilst the enterprise and generosity of the Rev. John Rossell, for seven years resident supernumerary minister at Cleethorpes, were of great service to the work. On 12th September, 1889, a magnificent organ, erected by Messrs. Hardy & Sons, Stockport, at a cost of nearly £600, was opened. The congregations, even in the winter months, are often larger than could have been accommodated in the former chapel, whilst during "the season" they are considerably augmented by visitors to this rapidly rising seaside resort.

There are ten Society classes, and one for juniors; members, 234, 13 on trial, 50 juniors. The Sunday-school reports 49 officers and teachers, 292 scholars, 160 members of band of hope. There is a mission band, a Christian association, and two ladies' sewing meetings. The Society is in a lively and prosperous condition. The Rev. William Shaw succeeded the Rev. John Rossell as the resident supernumerary minister at the Conference of 1889.

HOLTON-LE-CLAY.

(Population* in 1881, 283.)

The first Methodist service held in this village was conducted by Mr. George Lamming, of Tetney, in the house of Mr. William Sharp, in 1786. In due course a class was formed, which was regarded as part of the Tetney Society. In 1810 Mr. Thomas Hay—who had come into this neighbourhood from Riseholme, near Lincoln—took up his residence at Holton Lodge, and licensed his house for preaching. The Society at once increased, and a chapel became necessary. A portion of the funds was publicly subscribed, Mr. Thomas Hay held himself responsible for the remainder, and in 1827 the chapel was erected. Mr. Joseph Sadler and Mr. George Nicholson, of Bradley, conducted the opening services. The chapel was enlarged in 1836. It is a plain, comfortable structure, in good condition, providing accommodation for 106 persons. In 1883, Mr. Richard Hay—a Methodist of the fourth generation—generously handed over the building to the Connexion, and received the thanks of the Quarterly Meeting. The property is now duly settled according to the provisions of the “Model Deed.” The public services are well attended; there are 36 members in the Society and 50 scholars in the village

* From returns prepared by G. W. Bacon, Esq., F.R.G.S.

Sunday-school, which is a *common* school, meeting in the Board-school premises, and conducted by the Vicar—the Rev. J. Fertel—and Mr. Richard Hay, alternately. The Rev. William Wilkinson, who entered the itinerant work in 1820, was a native of this village. His mother was an intelligent and devoted Methodist. Mr. Wilkinson married a daughter of the Rev. Edward Towler. Two of Mr. Wilkinson's sons are barristers-at-law. His ministry was owned of God in the conversion of many, one of whom was the late Mr. John Barugh, then of Beeford in the Driffield circuit, and subsequently of Thwing and Bridlington—than whom Methodism has had few better examples in the East Riding of Yorkshire.*

NORTH THORESBY.

(Population, 745.)

The introduction of Methodism into this village is thus narrated by the Rev. Joshua Hocken:—

“In the spring of 1760, Elizabeth Blow, Mary Wilkinson, and Elizabeth Simpson of Grimsby, walked on the Sabbaths to North Thoresby, to hold prayer-meetings; these persons, in conjunction with Mary Tharratt, who occasionally accompanied them, were the honoured individuals who introduced Methodism here. The class and other meetings

* See *Wesleyan Magazine*, 1888.

were held in the house of Robert Davey, a blacksmith, and afterwards in William Burman's house, which was just opposite. Mr. Burman, after some time, fitted up one of his stables for preaching in, which was called the 'old chapel.' The preachers here were subjected to all kinds of annoyance. A Mr. John Morris was addressing the people, when some scoffers literally laughed in his face! He observed to them, 'You may laugh now, but you are sure to go to hell unless you repent.' Mr. Boardman also, in 1764, received his share of opposition here. The opposers of the Methodists became ingeniously wicked; sometimes they fumigated the place where they were assembled with the odour of asafoetida; at other times through a hole in the window they syringed blood upon them, and often cut their coats and garments with scissors! Mr. Boardman was obliged at length to apply to the magistrates at Louth for redress, who, on hearing the case, condemned the persecutors, after which peace was restored. The bells of Thoresby were rung to celebrate the victory. In this village the well-known Dr. Lawrence Kershaw, father of the Rev. John Kershaw, often preached; his sermons were distinguished for originality, force and eloquence." Thus far Mr. Hocken.

In 1821 a chapel was erected, at the opening of which the Rev. Thomas Galland, M.A., preached. This chapel was considerably improved in the

year 1839. The present chapel was built in 1846; it occupies an excellent position, and provides accommodation for 276 persons. The day-school, with residence for the master, was erected in 1856, and was transferred to the School Board of the North Thoresby United District, according to terms of agreement sanctioned by the Education Committee. As this volume is in the press, alterations of the chapel are in progress, from which considerable improvement is likely to result, both as to appearance and comfort. The estimated outlay is about £170, towards which £125 has already been raised or promised. The chapel is now closed for alterations, and is to be reopened in March.

There are two Society classes, and a junior class; the membership is 26; juniors, 13. There are 35 scholars in the Sunday-school, with 8 officers and teachers.

TETNEY.

(Population, 807.)

This is the oldest of our country societies, dating from 1743. On the occasion of John Nelson's first visit he records that "Some friends from Tetney and Cleathorpe prevailed with me to go to a shepherd's house near the sea-coast. There was a large company gathered together in that desert, and I opened my book on Galatians i. 3:—'Grace be unto

you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, who gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.' I felt much of the Lord's presence, and the power of God was so great among us, that the people fell flat on their faces, or kneel'd down upon their knees, so that there was not one left standing ; and their cry was so great that my voice could not be heard : then I fell upon my knees and called upon the Lord to heal the bones that were broken, and I believe many will praise God for that meeting to all eternity." The "shepherd's house" just mentioned was occupied by Micah Elmoor, at Coat-Garth in Tetney marsh, near the sea ; it disappeared nearly a hundred years ago. Micah Elmoor had a brother living in Grimsby, and through him he expressed his desire that the Methodist preacher should visit his abode. This led to the formation of the society at Tetney, with the shepherd as its first class leader.

Mr. Wesley visited Tetney on Tuesday, 24th February, 1747, in connection with his third coming to Grimsby. What he then saw and heard seems to have produced a deep impression upon his mind. In his Journals he writes thus : "At noon I examined the little society at Tetney. I have not seen such another in England. In the class-paper (which gives an account of the contribution for the poor) I observed one gave eight pence, often 10d.,

a week; another 13, 15, or 18*d.*; another, sometimes one, sometimes two shillings. I asked Micah Elmoor the leader (an Israelite indeed, who now rests from his labours), 'How is this? are you the richest society in all England?' He answered, 'I suppose not: but all of us who are single persons have agreed together, to give both ourselves, and *all we have* to God: and we do it gladly; whereby we are able from time to time to entertain all the strangers that come to Tetney, who often have no food to eat, nor any friend to give them a lodging.'

In his "Short History of the People called Methodists," written thirty-four years later, Mr. Wesley again refers to this incident. It is on account of these references that the Rev. Dr. Gregory, writing in the *Wesleyan Magazine* for January 1890, speaks of Tetney as "John Wesley's favourite Lincolnshire village."

The members of the Tetney Society, though few, remained steadfast after the death of Micah Elmoor in 1748: the preaching which had been but occasionally enjoyed, was now regularly established in the village, at the house of Thomas Ludlam, a labourer. In 1754 they were honoured with another and the last visit from their old friend, Mr. John Nelson, who preached from 1 John iii. 1, 2. Christopher Parker, who lived at the north end of the village, was the next to accommodate his neighbours, and he opened his house for preaching.

From 1783 to 1785, a barn belonging to Mr. George Lamming was the usual place of worship, after which a small chapel was built; this was superseded by a more commodious erection in 1818, opened by the Rev. John Aslin. In 1857, during the superintendency of the Rev. John E. Coulson, a day-school, with residence for the master, was erected. These premises were transferred to School Board control in 1873. The present chapel was built by Mr. J. M. Thompson, of Louth, from designs prepared by Mr. Charles Bell, London. It provides accommodation for 222 persons; there is also a Sunday-school room and two vestries. The total cost, as shown by the balance-sheet, was £1125. The Chapel Committee made a grant of £40 and a loan of £60, repayable in ten years. The foundation stones were laid on 4th May, 1876, by Miss Riggall, Mr. William Bennett, and Mr. George Stampe—all of Grimsby, and by Mr. John Hay, who was then residing in Louth, but who had been during many years of his residency at Bishopthorpe of great service to our cause at Tetney, and generally. His brother, the Rev. David Hay, preached on the occasion of the laying of the foundation stones. At the opening services the Rev. Dr. Pope, President of the Conference, preached. The services of the following were also called into requisition for sermons or lectures, either at Tetney or in Grimsby,

on behalf of the building fund:—The Revs. Samuel Coley, Drs. Milburn and Punshon, P. McKenzie, E. A. Telfer, and T. Champness. The chief donations were received from Messrs. C. Bell, J. E. Bourne, G. Foster, H. T. Hay, T. Ingamells, C. A. Marshall, J. K. Riggall, G. Stampe, I. Strawson. In 1887 the chapel was beautified, the outlay being met by a sale of work and proceeds of a public meeting, over which R. W. Perks, Esq., of London, presided.

There are four Society classes, including one for juniors. The membership in March 1889 was 44, with 16 junior members. The Sunday-school reports 14 officers and teachers and 80 scholars.

H U M B E R S T O N E.

(Population, 264.)

Methodist preaching was commenced here in 1791, through the solicitations of Joseph Richardson, who was a member of the Cleethorpes society—his wife also.* Being unable, owing to an accident which befel him, to continue his journeys to Cleethorpes, he entreated George Lamming of Tetney to come and preach in his cottage, which he accordingly did. The services were continued, and several persons were awakened and saved. These joined society either at Cleethorpes or Tetney. The congregations

* Memoir, *Wesleyan Magazine*, 1819, p. 597.

increased, and the services were removed to the larger house of Benjamin Richardson, and in 1795 a Society class was formed, Gabriel Benton becoming its leader. In 1797, Mr. William Tomlinson, farmer, a class leader and local preacher, came from Yorkshire to reside in the village. He fitted up one of his out-buildings as a preaching place. His son, Mr. Thomas Tomlinson, who afterwards occupied the farm, continued to assist the cause; but upon his removal from Humberstone the Methodists found themselves without a suitable meeting-place. In their extremity, the way was opened for the erection of a chapel, the site being generously given by the grandfather of the present Governor of New South Wales. The chapel was opened on 25th July, 1835, by James Henwood, Esq., of Hull and the Rev. James Methley.

Humberstone has taken a foremost place amongst the villages of this circuit in the support of our foreign missions. Traditions of crowded meetings held in the late Mr. J. Bee's barn, and addressed by some of the chief speakers of Methodism, are still lovingly preserved. Now that a missionary meeting is held annually in every village chapel, Humberstone still keeps its proud place as the largest contributor (outside the town) to the funds of this blessed cause—Cleethorpes alone excepted. The venerable and catholic-spirited vicar is among the annual subscribers. The two Society classes report

a membership of 39; in the Sunday-school there are 52 scholars, under the care of 19 officers and teachers. The chapel has been recently renovated, and the appliances for ventilation improved.

SCARTHO.

(Population, 224.)

The society in this village has never been a large one. The first class leader was Mr. John Burton, in whose house the services were commenced in 1784. He died in 1805, and was succeeded in the leadership by Matthew Cunningham, a good and zealous man, and a popular local preacher. For some years he enjoyed the benefit of a small annuity, settled upon him by a Mr. Fox of Middle Rasen, to whose daughter his preaching had been greatly blessed of God. Thus set free from temporal cares, he devoted himself to evangelistic work not only in the Grimsby circuit, but in many places in Lincolnshire, and some in Yorkshire. It was through his preaching that Charles Richardson—known as “The Lincolnshire Thrasher”—then a farm-lad in the employ of Mr. William Riggall of Telford, was led to religious concern. His work as an evangelist in various parts of Great Britain was singularly successful. The Rev. John E. Coulson, in a volume entitled “The Peasant Preacher,” has told the story of Charles Richardson’s life and labours in a truly entertaining and profitable fashion. The first chapel

built in Scartho was erected in 1836, on land given for the purpose by Matthew Cunningham. It was opened for divine worship by the Rev. Henry Fish, M.A. The present elegant little chapel—there is none prettier in the circuit—was built on the same site in 1868, during the superintendency of the Rev. James Carr. The chapel provides sittings for 103 persons ; the entire cost, including schoolroom, additional land, fittings, etc., exceeded £600. The foundation stone was laid by Mr. Francis Sowerby of Aylesby, on 9th January ; the chapel was opened on 4th June, 1868, by the Rev. Benjamin Gregory—then in the Lambeth circuit. The dedicatory services were continued by the Revs. Edward Abraham, Frederick C. Haime, and Thomas M'Cullagh. The chief donors were Messrs. J. Heaton, W. Chilton, W. S. Parker, John Heaton, jun., A. Abraham, and Rev. E. Abraham. The “ladies’ basket” and the school tea meetings together raised £64. The Rev. Edward Abraham, sen., upon his retirement from the Wesleyan ministry, resided for several years in Scartho, and rendered valuable assistance to our cause. Mr. W. Mumby was a leader here for many years. The society at present is the smallest in the circuit, numbering 13 ; there are 20 scholars in the Sunday-school under the care of four officers and teachers.

GREAT COATES.

(Population, 245.)

A Wesleyan society was formed here in 1759, with William Butters as class leader. For several years the preaching was held in Richard License's cottage, afterwards in that occupied by Thomas Dobb, who was a class leader. He was succeeded in the leadership by Holtby Jackson; but "God took him," and Joseph Askey, an excellent local preacher, took charge of the class. Mr. John Bagley was appointed a leader in 1849, and "continues to this day"—a veritable patriarch amongst the undershepherds of Grimsby circuit. The residency of Mr. Jabez Riggall in the village has proved to be of considerable advantage to our cause; he also is a class leader.

Methodism flourished in Great Coates for more than a hundred years without a place to call its own. On the death of Thomas Dobb, Mrs. Croft, Mrs. Knight, and others lent their houses for Methodist services. The thatched cottages in which they were held were destroyed by fire; but the chair, which, with a book-board, served several generations of preachers as a pulpit, is still preserved, as a memorial of "times of refreshing." The class meetings were held for many years in Mrs. Knight's house, and here preaching services were regularly

held after the fire, while the new cottage "was a preparing."

All attempts to secure land on which to erect a chapel were unavailing, until the efforts of certain ministers, aided by those of Mr. Thos. Stephenson, and supported by John Cordeaux, Esq., prevailed. Sir Richard F. Sutton, Bart., Lord of the Manor, and sole land-owner, generously granted, at a nominal rent, a site upon a ninety-nine years' lease, to the joy of those who had long desired "a house for the Lord." During the superintendency of the Rev. Edward Workman, a place of worship which is an ornament to the village was erected. Mr. Charles Bell prepared the designs; Messrs. Nightingale & Danby were the builders. The foundation stones of the chapel were laid on 24th May, 1881, by Messrs. T. Stephenson and J. Bagley; it was opened on 18th August, 1881, the Rev. Thomas McCullagh, of Hull, chairman of the district, being the preacher.

The services are well attended, and are often marked by a large measure of Divine influence. The society numbers 36; there is no Sunday-school; the band of hope reports a membership of 25. A sewing meeting has recently been established, with a view to assist the *Joyful News* mission.

The Rev. William Fish, who entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1785, and died in Guernsey in 1843, was a native of this village.

STALLINGBOROUGH.

(Population, 483.)

Particular interest attaches to this village as the birthplace of "Anne Askew" (Ayscough), the Protestant martyr of 1546. Within the church there is an alabaster tomb, with semi-effigy, to Sir Francis Ayscough, Sheriff of Lincolnshire, who gave his sister up to the authorities.

Methodism was introduced into Stallingborough in 1787, chiefly through the instrumentality of Mr. Richard Burnett, who came to reside here in October 1786. He invited the preachers to his house, and used various methods to induce his neighbours to come and hear them. He was appointed as leader of the first Society class, was a local preacher for many years, and died in 1832. A chapel was built on his own land, contiguous to his dwelling, and was opened in September 1821 by Rev. Thomas Tattershall. This building, becoming unsuited to the requirements of the cause, was handed over to the lord of the manor, who granted a ninety-nine years' lease of the land upon which the present commodious chapel stands. The old chapel passed into his possession at a valuation. The new sanctuary is capable of accommodating 259 persons. The foundation stone was laid on 4th August, 1864, by Miss Pearson (now Mrs. Thos. Addison, of Revesley). The chapel

was opened for divine worship by the Rev. Luke H. Wiseman, M.A., in March 1865. The Rev. Richard Martin and others also took part in the opening services. Messrs. Bellamy & Hardy (Lincoln) were the architects; Messrs. John Allison and J. & J. Benton, the contractors. The school-room was erected in 1876. The total cost of the premises was about £850, including a debt on the old chapel. By the effort made in 1879 all outstanding liabilities were met, and the premises made free from debt.

There are at present six Society classes, and one for juniors; members, 77; 3 on trial; 15 juniors. Sunday-school—officers and teachers, 32; scholars, 102.

GRAINSBY.

(Population, 148.)

As considerable opposition was offered to those who sought to hold a cottage prayer-meeting in this village, Mr. Francis Burnham and his sister—Mrs. Sands of the Manor House—resolved to build a chapel and place it at the disposal of the Wesleyan Methodists. The chapel is private property. It was erected in 1860. Within are mural tablets erected to the memory of Francis Burnham, Esq., who died 26th February, 1866, and Mrs. Elizabeth Piercy,

daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Sands, who died 27th December, 1876, and her two infant children.

A Society class meets at the chapel, and another at Hawerby, two miles distant, in the house of the aged leader. There are sixteen members of society, and twenty children in the Sunday-school.

The country societies—Cleethorpes included—reported in March 1889, 521 members, 94 in Junior Society classes, 643 Sunday scholars.

CHAPTER IX.

SPREAD INTO BANDS.

CAISTOR AND LACEBY CIRCUIT.

AT the first Conference held after Mr. Wesley's death (1791), the Connexion was divided into districts, of one of which Grimsby was the head. This designation was continued until 1803, when the name of Lincolnshire District was given to it; Grimsby still standing as the first mentioned circuit. In 1815 Grimsby was attached to the Hull District, and in that connection it has continued to this present.

The first division of the Grimsby circuit took place in 1786, since which time numerous divisions and subdivisions have been made. There are now no less than fifteen circuits included in the area which the original circuit embraced,—viz. : Grimsby, George Street, Horncastle (1786), Boston (1795), Barton (originally Barrow, afterwards Winterton) (1796), Spalding (1797), Louth (1799), Spilsby (1802), Alford (1813), Market Rasen (1813), Brigg (1815), Wainfleet (1840), Coningsby (1844),

Bardney (1867), Caistor and Laceby (1868), Holbeach (1873).

At the meetings of the Hull and Lincoln District Committees respectively, held in May 1889, the returns presented by the above-mentioned circuits furnished the following aggregate totals:—Members of society, 13,828; in Junior Society classes, 1522; Ministers, 35; Local preachers, 532; Class leaders (lay), 848; Sunday-school officers and teachers, 3336; Scholars, 18,905; Estimated value of trust property, £193,725. (See Schedule, Note C, p. 133.)

Together, these circuits reported 101 bands of hope, with 6997 members; 23 day-schools, with 3418 scholars. They raised during the year for foreign missions, on the general account, £2648 17s. 10d., for the Ladies' Auxiliary, £92 15s. 3d., by Christmas Day family offerings, £112 2s. 5d.: total, £2853 15s. 6d.

From 1813, when Market Rasen became a circuit, until 1868, the Grimsby circuit had not been divided. The circuit had become unwieldy, the cost of working it heavy, whilst the long journeys involved in supplying the distant places were attended with much exposure and loss of time. Moreover, Grimsby was rapidly growing, and was making increased demands upon the attention of the preachers and upon Methodist purse-strings. It was therefore resolved, after much serious discussion of the project, to detach the western

portion by creating a new circuit, to be called the GRIMSBY, CAISTOR AND LACEBY CIRCUIT. The ministers who have laboured in the circuit are as under:—

1868-9 Timothy R. Moxon, Wm. Cullum.
1870 Timothy R. Moxon, Wm. M. Kidman.
1871-2 Henry Banks, Wm. M. Kidman.
1873 Henry Banks, Jos. M. Browne.
1874-5 Martin Jubb, Jos. M. Browne.
1876 Martin Jubb, Andrew Palmer.
1877-8 Theo. S. Gregory, Andrew Palmer.
1879 Theo. S. Gregory, Thos. Henwood.
1880-1 John Stembridge, Thos. Henwood.
1882 John Stembridge, Wm. Sharpley.
1883-4 Edwin Dixon, Wm. Sharpley.
1885 Edwin Dixon, John W. Denham.
1886-7 William Calvert, John W. Denham.
1888 William Calvert, Samuel H. Terrill.
1889 Edward Abraham, Samuel H. Terrill.

CAISTOR.

(Population in 1881, 1867.)

Certain Methodist women from Grimsby held occasional prayer-meetings here in 1761. The Vicar tried, but in vain, to convince them that when the Apostle encouraged prayer "without ceasing" and "everywhere," he meant that folk should "use a book and come to church." Not finding argument successful, he roundly told these godly women that

he would not have it. Mr. R. C. Brackenbury, too, is known to have preached here about 1781. For all this, Methodism gathered no adherents in Caistor until Mr. Nathaniel Saunby came to reside here in 1803, at a time when Market Rasen was still a part of the Grimsby circuit. He opened his house for preaching, and a society consisting of about fifteen persons was soon formed. In 1805, a disused chapel being for sale, the Methodists bought it, renovated it, and dedicated it to the service of God in the Wesleyan name. For upwards of thirty years Mr. N. Saunby generously supported our cause in Caistor. He was a local preacher, erected a schoolroom at his own expense, and entertained the preachers at his house. He died in January 1839. The chapel was enlarged and improved from time to time, until in 1842 it was superseded by the present sanctuary, which is estimated to seat 502 persons. The day-school was erected in 1867. Mrs. Audus, of Selby—daughter of Mr. Turner, a surgeon of Caistor—contributed £50 towards its erection, another £50 conditionally upon a night-school being conducted, and made certain other benefactions, a full and particular account of which is recorded upon the school wall.

LACEBY and AYLESBY.

(Population 1017 and 112.)

John Whitgift, Archbishop of Canterbury 1568—

1604, was a native of Laceby. Mr. Wesley preached here several times in connection with his visits to Grimsby. A society was formed about 1753. The services were first held in the house of Thomas Tomlinson, afterwards in those of John Scrivener, Aylesby Mill; William Anderson, John Richardson, Joseph Plaskitt, and Edward Marshall. A chapel was built in 1810 upon land belonging to Mr. Marshall, and was opened by the Rev. Thomas Rought and Mr. Thomas Bellamy, of Grimsby. In 1836 a larger chapel was built, the project being generously supported by Mr. and Mrs. Francis Sowerby, who had just joined the society, and who for many years assisted the cause of Methodism throughout the circuit and at large. The foundation stone was laid by the Rev. Joshua Hocken on 21st February; the chapel was opened by the Rev. Robert Newton on 15th June. The Revs. W. Clegg, John Stephenson (father of Rev. Dr. Stephenson of "The Children's Home"), and Mr. C. Welch, of Hull, continued the services. The present chapel was erected in 1853, at a cost of £1200; it will seat 478 persons.

At Laceby, Charles Delamotte—who accompanied the Wesleys to Georgia in 1735—died on 14th April, 1796, aged eighty-two years. The Rev. Luke Tyerman says Mr. Delamotte died at Barrow: that is not the case. He rests near the south wall of the chancel of Aylesby church; the tombstone having got injured during the restoration of the church in

1857, Mr. F. Sowerby caused a new stone bearing the original inscription to be erected to his memory.

KEELBY.

(Population, 742.)

Methodism in this village dates from 1780; Thomas Catlow, who resided at Riby, was the first class leader. The services were held in Anthony Kemp's cottage, and afterwards—for forty years—in Mr. Nicholson's kitchen. A chapel was built in 1824, chiefly through the liberality of his son, Mr. John Nicholson; it was enlarged in 1829. The present chapel, with school attached, was erected in 1867; it was opened on 1st May, and will accommodate fully 400 persons.

WALTHAM.

(Population, 743.)

A society was formed here in 1752, but from 1802 to 1813 the services were discontinued, owing to the decline of the cause. The preaching was first held in the cottage of Jonathan Richardson, who was the class leader. In that office he was succeeded by John Cheeseman of Bradley, and John Farrow of Scartho. In 1763 the services were removed to the house of Richard Luddington, and subsequently to that of Thomas Bennett, where they were continued until 1802. The preaching was recommenced in 1813, now in the house of Thomas Jenney. A

revival of the work of God resulted in a considerable accession to the society, and a chapel was built in 1820, which was opened by the Rev. Joshua Marsden. In 1858 a day-school was erected. The present chapel, which will seat 272 persons, was built in 1876. The second minister of the Caistor, etc., circuit resides at Waltham, which is three and a half miles from Grimsby. The Rev. John Beecham, D.D., who entered the ministry in 1815, and became President of the Conference in 1850, was a native of this village. He died in 1856.

HATCLIFFE and BEELSBY.

(Population 203 and 171.)

The Rev. William Thom—who was then stationed in Grimsby—held the first Methodist service in Beelsby, in 1774. A class was formed in the following year, and met in the house of the leader, Michael Plaskitt. He died in 1775; his son Joseph succeeded him in the office. The cause collapsed in 1781, but was recommenced in 1797, and continued until 1828, when a chapel was built in Hatcliffe on land belonging to Matthew Cunningham, jun. In January 1838 a better chapel was erected, chiefly through the liberality of Mr. Christopher Coates, aided by Messrs. F. and John Sowerby. It was opened by the Rev. Robert Newton and the Rev. Joseph Fowler. It provides sittings for 168 persons. There is a Wesleyan day-school in the village, established in 1857.

LIMBER.

(Population, 489.)

A society was formed here in 1786, through the instrumentality of William Redmoor, a local preacher who resided at Habrough ; the first class leader was Robert Lamming. Services were held in the houses of Christopher Neal and Benjamin Pearson ; the latter was turned out of his house in consequence, whereupon George Roe opened his house to the preachers, until, in 1816, Mr. Nelson fitted up his barn for the services. The present chapel was built in 1841, and provides 152 sittings.

IRBY-UPON-HUMBER.

(Population, 224.)

Matthew Cunningham preached here in 1796, standing upon a large stone by the roadside. William Overton was one of the first to yield to Christ, and in 1797 he opened his house for preaching. He was accused by one of felony for so doing, and by another he was complained of to the steward of the Brocklesby estate, with a view to his eviction. The steward, however, replied that the Methodists were some of the best tenants Lord Yarborough had. After William Overton's death, services were held for a short time in James Chapman's house, and subsequently, for nearly half a century, in the thatched cottage near the church, occupied by Mrs. Todd and her blind son,

Frank. To them Irby Methodism owes a large debt of gratitude. Some of Mrs. Todd's descendants (the Brocklesbys) are associated with Grimsby Methodism at the present time. The late Dr. Beecham preached his first sermon in Irby. The present elegant little chapel was erected in 1884; it was opened on 24th June by the Rev. Richard Green, Chairman of the Hull District. On the following Sunday the Rev. Owen Watkins, of Transvaal fame, continued the services.

ASHBY-CUM-FENBY.

(Population, 264.)

John Beecham, then a local preacher in the Grimsby circuit, introduced Methodist preaching into this village in 1813. A society consisting of twelve members was formed. Services were held in the house of Mr. Samuel Allison, until—chiefly through the exertions of Mr. James Odling—a chapel was erected in 1836. The Revs. John C. Leppington (brother of the Grimsby surgeon) and Joshua Hocken conducted the opening services in August. The chapel will accommodate 116 persons.

SWALLOW.

(Population, 238.)

Here we have a chapel in which divine worship is conducted on Sunday evenings. It was erected in 1863, and provides sittings for 140 persons.

BARNOLDBY-LE-BECK.

(Population, 212.)

The Methodist preachers were invited to this village in 1785 by Mr. Edward Abey, farmer. For a few years a small society existed; it died out in 1792, owing to Mr. Abey's removal, but was resuscitated in 1801, through the blessing of God upon the labours of Matthew Cunningham. The class met in Mrs. Williamson's house; here also preaching services were held for some time, and subsequently at Mary Quickfall's; then a house was hired for the purpose. The present chapel was built in 1833, and was opened by the Rev. Francis Derry and Mr. T. Stratton, of Hull.

BRADLEY.

(Population, 100.)

Preaching services were occasionally held here as early as 1794; first in the house of Mr. Cook, afterwards in that of John West. The Society dates from 1817. Mr. George Nicholson, who was for some time a popular and useful preacher, then resided here. Services were held for many years in the house of Joseph Richardson. In 1850 a small chapel was erected; it is now chiefly supplied by local preachers from Grimsby.

BRIGSLEY.

(Population, 139.)

In 1834 a society was formed here; the class met in the house of William Mason. The first leader was John Cunningham, who was succeeded by John Skelton. The chapel was built in 1857, at the time when so many schemes of Methodist extension were promoted by the zeal and enterprise of the Rev. John E. Coulson.

ROTHWELL.

(Population, 260.)

The Rev. J. C. Leppington commenced services here in 1799, in the house of Thomas Johnston. Mark Rowson was the first class leader, the meetings being held in his cottage. For about fifteen years the little society ceased to exist. In 1820 Richard Cousins formed a new class; and services were held in a schoolroom. The chapel was erected in 1840; it was re-seated two years since, and provides accommodation for about seventy persons.

NETTLETON.

(Population, 482.)

It was in 1796 that Methodism was introduced into this village. The services were held successively in the houses of Messrs. Henry Spring, Zechariah Featherstone, and Robert Appleby. Mr. Featherstone

gave the land upon which the first chapel was built, in 1800 ; he also contributed £30 towards the cost of its erection. The present chapel was built in 1848, and seats 110 persons.

RIBY.

(Population, 273.)

Services were held for some years in a cottage which stood near the village pond ; afterwards, by permission of Colonel Tomline, J.P., D.L., in a house near the cross roads, which was appropriated to the purpose. This same gentleman ultimately gave a site for a chapel, out of respect for one of his workpeople, Charles Hallett. The foundation stone was laid on Shrove Tuesday, 1884, and the chapel was opened for divine service in the afternoon of 3rd June following, by the Rev. R. Green, Chairman of the District. An evening meeting was held, in aid of the building fund, in Laceby chapel, Mr. George Stampe, of Grimsby, presiding.

RAVENDALE.

(Population, E. 108 ; W. 57.)

An afternoon service is held here on alternate Sundays.

With the exception of Caistor, which is a very small town, this is a circuit of villages, and is purely agricultural. The entire population of the circuit

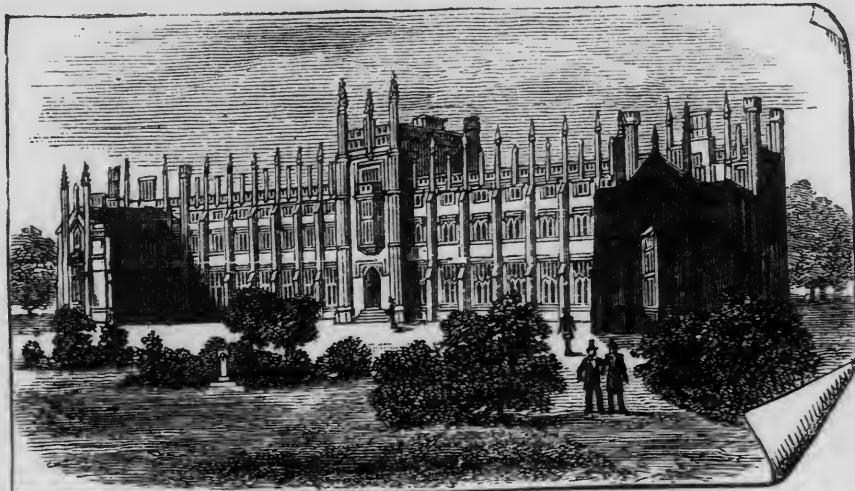
does not greatly exceed 8000 souls. The circuit officers are as follows:—*Circuit Stewards*, Messrs. W. S. Lord and H. Sharpley; *Secretary to the Quarterly Meeting*, Rev. S. H. Terrill; *Auditors of Circuit Accounts*, Messrs. M. Addison and S. M'Aulay; *Auxiliary Fund Treasurer*, Mr. C. Beaumont; *Missionary Treasurer*, Mr. S. M'Aulay; *Missionary Secretaries*, Rev. S. H. Terrill and Mr. R. Turner; *Circuit Chapel Secretary*, Mr. S. M'Aulay; *Treasurer of Horse Hire Fund*, Mr. W. Lancaster.

The Local Preachers whose names appear upon the circuit plan commencing 26th January, 1890, are: Messrs. J. Ellis, H. Smith, G. Parker, T. Moore, C. Beaumont, W. Smith, W. Lancaster, M. Thompson, G. Borrill, R. J. Percival, C. Parker, J. Lancaster, H. Gladwin, E. Skelton, C. Allison, F. Scoffin, T. Gibbons, H. Birkett, G. Howson, J. Towle. *On Trial*: W. Gibson.

A large assistance to the supply of the pulpits of this circuit is given by the Grimsby (George Street) local preachers. The membership, in March 1889, was 720, with 38 on trial; Junior Society members, 60. There are 43 class leaders, 9 Sunday-schools, with 139 officers and teachers and 614 scholars. In the circuit there are three Wesleyan day-schools, with 338 scholars. In the four bands of hope there are 238 members. The trust properties are of the estimated value of £10,161.

Since its formation, in 1868, the circuit has suffered

considerably through agricultural depression, and by the death of several generous supporters of Methodism—notably that of Mr. Francis Sowerby, of Aylesby. It has shown its vitality and enterprise, however, by the erection of two new chapels and the improvement of others, and, with the return of "better days" for the Wold farmers, bids fair to fulfil the expectations which were formed respecting it at the time of its separation from Grimsby. Messrs. F. Sowerby and J. Lancaster have been severally elected by the Hull District as Lay Representatives to the Conferences of 1879 and of 1889.



RICHMOND COLLEGE.

(Opened Sept. 15th, 1843)

CHAPTER X.

GRIMSBY AND LARGER METHODISM.

WESLEYAN-METHODISM, throughout the length and breadth of Great Britain, is one. No attempt is made to enforce uniformity in matters divers and sundry. Thus, a Wesleyan chapel may be either plain or elaborate, its services liturgical or non-liturgical; the funds may be raised either by collection or by offertory, the ministers' stipends may be generous or scanty, as circumstances or sentiment determine; and all this without any violation of either Connexional rule or usage. But with all permissible variety in respect of methods of work and procedure, the doctrine and discipline of the Connexion are alike uniform. Whoever, after the

specified term of probation, receives the Society ticket, is thereby recognised as not only a member of the particular class to which he has attached himself, but as a member of the Society of the People called Methodists. So long as the ticket is renewed quarter by quarter he continues to be so recognised. Each Society class stands in relation to the Leaders' Meeting and the circuit Quarterly Meeting, and is thus associated with the District Meeting and the Conference.

The "connexional sentiment" is invaluable to Wesleyan Methodism—indeed, it is indispensable:

"United we stand—divided we fall."

Connexionism has both its advantages and its obligations; there are not only helps to be derived from it, there are also responsibilities to be borne. Great measures necessary to the maintenance and extension of the Connexion can only be carried out by the loyal co-operation of the several circuits. The Conference—as such—has neither purse nor scrip. It simply authorises and gives effect to such proposals as have originated in the councils of the elected representatives of "the body"—ministerial and lay. It is greatly to be desired that our people generally should duly understand and consider what is meant by being a member of the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion. We have no quarrel with Congregationalism; we do not question the Scriptural validity either of its ordination or of

its form of church government; but Methodism as Methodism can never exist on corresponding lines.

Grimsby Wesleyans have from time to time made loyal and generous response to Connexional appeals. For the *Centenary Fund* (1839), the circuit raised some £450; for the *Connexional Relief and Extension Fund* (1853), nearly £700; for the *Missionary Jubilee Fund* (1863), £462; for the *Thanksgiving Fund* (1878), £787 5s. 4d.* During the past year the collections and subscriptions to the various funds of the Connexion from the George Street circuit were as follows:—Foreign Missions, £331 11s. 11d.; Home Missions, £115 5s. 11d.; Theological Institution, £24 14s. 9d.; General Chapel Fund, £28 19s. 7d.; Education Fund, £15 17s. 7d.; Worn-out Ministers' and Widows' Fund, £66 7s. 2d.; Schools Fund, £44 18s. 7d.; Children's Home and Orphanage (Dr. T. B. Stephenson's), £28 16s. 9d.; Ladies' Auxiliary for Female Education, etc., in Foreign Countries, £25.

Three years after the organisation of the Wesleyan Foreign Missionary Society—namely, in 1816—a Grimsby Circuit Auxiliary was formed. Mr. Thos. Plaskitt was appointed its treasurer; this office was subsequently held by Mr. Francis Sowerby, and for many years has been held by H. M. Leppington,

* The Caistor and Laceby circuit contributed £1244 os. 8d., including the late Mr. Francis Sowerby's donation of £1000.

Esq., J.P. During the seventy-three years of the existence of the Auxiliary, no less a sum than £35,000 has been raised in the Grimsby circuits ; of this amount £5000 has been contributed by the Caistor and Laceby circuit since its formation (1868).

Since the admission of *Laymen* to the Wesleyan Conference, in 1878, it has been the honour of several Grimsby gentlemen to be elected by the Hull District Meeting as Representatives. The following have been so elected : 1878 (Bradford), Mr. William Cook ; 1879 (Birmingham), Mr. Robert Barnaby ; 1881 (Liverpool), Mr. James Whiteley ; 1882 (Leeds), Mr. William J. Eden ; 1883 (Hull), Mr. Henry Bennett ; 1884 (Burslem), Mr. Geo. K. Gossop ; 1885 (Newcastle), Mr. William Jackson ; 1886 (London), Mr. George Stampe ; 1887 (Manchester), Mr. Robert Barnaby ; 1888 (Camberne), Mr. Geo. Stampe ; 1889 (Sheffield), Mr. R. Barnaby.

From time to time Grimsby entertains the *Hull District Meeting* during its sessions in the month of May. The last occasion on which the District Committee assembled in this town was in 1886, shortly after the completion of the new premises attached to George Street Chapel. At the conclusion of its sessions, "hearty thanks were presented to the Grimsby friends for their very generous hospitality, and also to the ministers and others for the admirable arrangements made to facilitate the

business of the meeting, and to render the visit of the brethren to Grimsby so enjoyable."

When the *Conference* assembles in Hull, a considerable number of the ministers who attend are provided for in Grimsby.

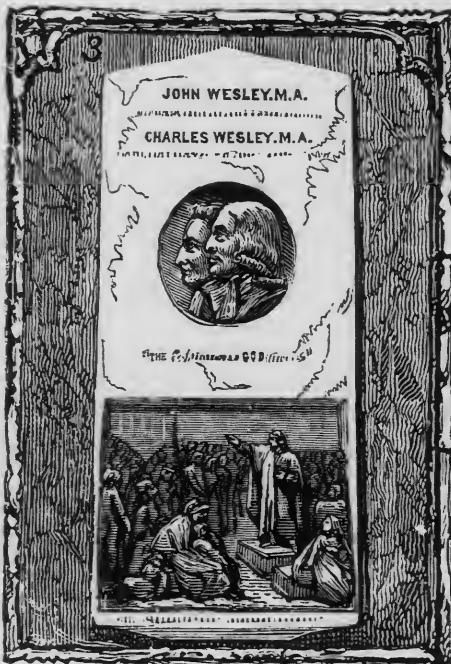
The agitations of 1797, 1835, and 1849, which wrought disaster in some parts of the Connexion, did not so seriously affect the Grimsby circuit. That of 1797 might have been expected to touch Grimsby more than either of the later movements, since both Mr. Alexander Kilham and Mr. William Thom had previously travelled here, and were highly esteemed.

It is not possible to present a complete list of the names of gentlemen who held the office of CIRCUIT STEWARD in this Circuit prior to 1800. The following, however, have accepted the responsibilities and honours of the office during the present century. Some of them have been circuit stewards for more than one term of office :—

Messrs. W. Tomlinson, T. Hay, C. Dimsdale, J. Plaskitt, R. Willerton, N. Saunby, T. Wintingham, N. Plaskitt, J. Nicholson, J. Hobson, Q. Veal, W. Coates, H. M. Leppington, J. Hay, W. Wilkinson, W. Hay, C. Hewson, G. Smith, J. Coatsworth, F. Sowerby, W. Grange, W. Coates, J. K. Riggall, Jas. Bennett, W. Cook, R. Barnaby, J. Whiteley, W. J. Eden, G. K. Gossop, G. Stampe, W. Jackson, M. Wilkin, J. H. Armstrong.

CHAPTER XI.

THE MAKERS OF FUTURE HISTORY.



WESLEY MEMORIAL TABLET IN
WESTMINSTER ABBEY.

associated has been one of the most remarkable chapters of religious history. In Great Britain and Ireland, and in various parts of the world, the growth of Methodism is simply astounding.*

That a magnificent future lies before the Methodist people cannot be doubted, if only they remain

WHEN the Rev. John Wesley died (1791), he left 312 itinerant preachers, 115 circuits, 16 mission stations, and 79,000 members. He might well exclaim, "What hath God wrought!" Since the founder of Methodism died, the spread and consolidation of the work with which, under God, his name is

* See p. 133 for detailed returns (Note C.).

true to God and to their mission. The mission of Methodism, as set forth by Mr. Wesley, is "to spread Scriptural holiness."

The organisation of Methodism can only be made effectual to this great end as its ministers, office-bearers, and private members maintain its doctrine, its discipline, and its duty. Hitherto, Methodism has been a growth, rather than a strategical movement. Lord Macaulay* has said that John Wesley's "genius for government was not inferior to that of Richelieu," the Cardinal Prime Minister of Louis XV. That wonderful faculty for managing men and affairs, valuable as it was, was not, however, the prime secret of Wesley's blessed success. His highest ambition was to save souls ; his learning, his master-spirit, his methods, his consuming desire, were all made subservient to that lofty, Christ-like aim. May the gospel of personal zeal and effort never be exchanged for the gospel of committees !

"The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity. But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth ; and some to honour, and some to dishonour. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. ii. 19-21.)

* Macaulay's *Essays* ("Southey's Colloquies").

CIRCUIT DIRECTORY.

Stewards and other Officers, 1890.

Circuit Stewards: Messrs. M. WILKIN and J. H. ARMSTRONG.
Secretary to the Quarterly Meeting: Mr. W. J. EDEN.
Auditors of the Circuit Accounts: Messrs. J. K. RIGGALL and J. WHITELEY.
Secretary to the Local Preachers' Meeting: Mr. J. WHITELEY.
Treasurer to the Local Preachers' Horse-hire Fund: Mr. WILLIAM COOK.
General Chapel Secretary for the Circuit: Mr. GEORGE CAMPEY.
Treasurer to the Auxiliary Fund: Mr. GEORGE STAMPE.
Secretary to the Education Committee: Rev. W. GEORGE.
Treasurer to the Foreign Mission Fund: Mr. H. M. LEPPINGTON, J.P.
Secretaries to ditto: Rev. S. NICHOLLS and Mr. J. BENNETT.
Treasurer to the Juvenile Home and Foreign Mission Fund: Mr. W. J. EDEN.
Secretary to ditto: Mr. R. ATKINSON.

[*Explanations*: D, Deceased; J, Junior Society.]

GEORGE STREET (*Present Trust, formed 1871*).

Trustees: Messrs. H. Bennett, W. Cates (D), J. Coatsworth (D), W. Cook, W. J. Eden, Wm. Grange, John Hay (D), C. J. Hay, Rd. Hay, J. Mells (D), E. Rusling (D), G. Smith, J. H. Smith, F. Sowerby (D), J. Stephenson, T. Stephenson, (D), J. L. Watmough (D); *Treasurer*, Mr. Wm. Cook; *Secretary*, Mr. John Stephenson. **Chapel and Seat Stewards**: Messrs. Wm. Cook and Geo. Campey; *Organist*, Mr. Jas. Bennett; *Treasurer to Organ and Choir Committee*, Mr. W. J. Eden; *Secretary*, Mr. G. Brown; *Choir Master*, Mr. A. Booth. **Society Stewards**: Messrs. James Bennett and W. H. Carte. **Poor Stewards**: Messrs. J. Ripley and A. Cook. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. J. Ashmore, J. K. Capes, J. Chatterton, G. G. Collingwood, W. Cook, G. Ellis, Househam (J), J. Lidgard, E. Pearson, C. E. Phillipson, J. K. Riggall, J. Southern, T. Wharton, Mesdames Bennett, Grange, Stampe, and Whitlamsmith, Miss A. Riggall (J). **Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. G. G. Collingwood and Geo. Campey; *Infant School Superintendent*, Mr. W. Cook, *Secretary*, Mr. A. Cook; *Secretaries*, Mr. G. G. Collingwood (Com.), Messrs. J. Bennett, Jos. Cook, J. H. Larder, and J. Southern; *Treasurer*, Mr. M. Wilkin; *Librarians*, Messrs. W. Peart and W. H. G. Collingwood. **Juvenile Missionary Association**:

Treasurer, Mr. G. Campey; *Secretary*, Mr. A. Cook. **Band of Hope**: *President*, Rev. John A. B. Harry; *Vice-President*, Mr. W. J. Eden; *Superintendents*, Messrs. Barton and Herringshaw; *Secretary*, Mr. A. Wain; *Treasurer*, Mr. Jos. Sutton. **Foreign Missions**: *Branch Secretary*, Mr. Jas. Bennett. **Tract Society**: *Secretary*, Mr. G. Willoughby. **Ladies' Sewing Meeting (Missions)**: *Treasurer*, Mrs. Jas. Bennett; *Secretary*, Mrs. Wm. Cook. **Christian Association**: *President*, Rev. J. A. B. Harry; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. J. Ashmore, G. G. Collingwood, and W. J. Eden; *Treasurer*, Mr. J. T. Jennings; *Secretaries*, Messrs. A. Cook and A. Hay.

VICTORIA (*Deed of 1882*).

Trustees: Messrs. J. H. Armstrong, R. Barnaby, H. Bennett, H. Bennett, jun., Jos. Bennett, Wm. Bennett, Wm. Burt, G. W. B. Gee, G. W. Goddard, Wm. Grange, Jos. Guy, T. Kirman, J. K. Riggall, C. Watmough, J. L. Watmough (d), Jas. Whiteley, Wm. Woolsey (d). *Treasurer*, Mr. James Whiteley; *Secretary*, Mr. Chas. Watmough. **Chapel and Seat Stewards**: Messrs. J. Whiteley, G. W. and H. Goddard. *Organists*, Mr. H. Bennett and the Misses Burt; *Choir Master*, Mr. C. Horn; *Treasurer*, Mr. W. Burt; *Secretary*, Mr. H. Bennett, jun. **Society Stewards**: Messrs. Jos. Whiteley and Jos. Middleton. **Poor Stewards**: Messrs. Chas. Watmough and R. Quine. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. J. H. Armstrong, R. Barnaby, W. Burt, C. Hoggard, T. Kirman, J. C. Richards, J. H. Smith, Jas. Whiteley, Jos. Whiteley (j), J. C. Woodliff; Mesdames Barnaby, Goddard, and Wenney.—**Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. J. H. Armstrong and T. Kirman; *Secretaries*, (Com.) Mr. Wm. Readman, (School) Messrs. C. Watmough and G. W. Goddard; *Treasurer*, Mr. Kirman. **Young Men's Class**, Mr. H. Crabtree. **Juvenile Missionary Association**: *Treasurer*, Mr. G. W. Goddard; *Secretary*, Mr. Jos. Whiteley. **Band of Hope**: *Conductor and Secretary*, Mr. William Readman. **Mission Band**: *Leaders*, Messrs. J. H. Armstrong and J. C. Woodliff; *other Officers*, Messrs. G. Simpson, J. T. Woodliff, H. C. Jackson. **Young People's Union**: *President*, Rev. Geo. Lester. **Ladies' Sewing Meeting**: *Treasurer*, Mrs. Goddard; *Secretary*, Mrs. Barnaby. **Foreign Missions**: Mr. Joseph Whiteley, *Branch Secretary*.

VICTORIA STREET SCHOOLS (*New Trust formed March 1887*).

Trustees: Messrs. J. H. Armstrong, R. Barnaby, H. Bennett,

H. Bennett, jun., J. Bennett, W. Bennett, W. Burt, G. W. Goddard, J. Guy, T. Kirman, J. K. Riggall, C. Watmough, James Whiteley. *Trustees' Treasurer*, Mr. J. K. Riggall. **Day School**: *Correspondent with the Education Department, Whitehall*, Mr. Joseph Bennett, J.P.; *Teaching Staff*, Mr. James Whiteley (Head Master), two certificated assistants, and six pupil teachers; *Managers*, The Trustees, with the Ministers of the circuit.—**Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. A. Searle and W. A. Smith; *Secretaries*, Messrs. Jas. Catley (Com.), Jason Catley and M. Taylor (School); **Juvenile Missionary Association**: *Treasurer*, Mr. M. Taylor; *Secretary*, Mr. Jason Catley. **Band of Hope**: *Conductor*, Mr. W. A. Smith; *Treasurer*, Mr. James Catley; *Secretary*, Mr. Jason Catley.

DUNCOMBE STREET (Trust formed August 1872).

Trustees: Messrs. R. Barnaby, H. Bennett, Jos. Bennett, W. Cook, W. J. Eden, G. W. B. Gee, J. Goddard, G. K. Gossop, W. Grange, C. J. Hay, W. Jackson, W. Jackson (D), T. Kirman, C. Oliver, J. Higson Smith, W. Smith (D), G. Stampe, A. Stephenson, T. Stephenson (D), C. Watmough, James Whiteley. *Treasurer*, Mr. George Stampe; *Secretary*, Mr. Richard Atkinson. **Chapel and Seat Stewards**: Messrs. Alderman W. Jackson, J.P., Charles Oliver, Richard Atkinson, and T. Moss; *Organist*, Mr. H. Abbott; *Choir Secretary*, Mr. J. Shepherd; *Treasurer*, Mr. W. Wilson. **Society Stewards**: Messrs. C. Oliver and R. Robinson. **Poor Stewards**: Messrs. J. H. Gee and John Chatburn. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. R. Atkinson, W. Auckland, G. Cobley (J), J. Ellis, W. Holmes, T. Jackson, William Jackson, W. Moody, E. Mould, R. Mumby, R. Robinson, A. Searle, John Searle, B. W. Smith, C. Smith, G. Western, Mesdames Banks and Lawrence, Misses Beacock (J) and Searle. **Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. G. Shadlock and William Holmes; *Secretaries*, Messrs. C. Oliver (Com.), Ed. Banks, and B. Wall, jun. (School); *Treasurer*, Mr. John Chatburn; *Librarian*, Mr. W. T. Overton. **Juvenile Missionary Association**: *Treasurer*, Mr. E. Mould; *Secretary*, Mr. G. Cobley; *Branch Secretary to Foreign Missions*, Mr. C. Oliver. **Band of Hope**: *President*, Mr. E. Mould; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. W. Renison and B. W. Smith (Hon.); *Treasurer*, Mr. W. Moody; *Secretaries*, Mr. F. Miller and Miss E. Denniss. **Ladies' Sewing Meeting**: *President*, Mrs. Nicholls; *Treasurer*, Mrs. Banks; *Secretary*, Mrs. J. Searle. **Mission Band**:

President, Mr. E. Mould ; **Secretary**, Mr. W. Smith. **Christian Association** : **President**, Rev. Sampson Nicholls ; **Vice-Presidents**, Messrs. J. Searle, J. Chatburn, and R. Atkinson ; **Secretaries**, Messrs. W. Smith and F. Miller ; **Treasurer**, Miss Searle.

ARLINGTON STREET (*Trust formed March 1878*).

Trustees : Messrs. J. H. Armstrong, R. Barnaby, J. Benton (D), W. Burt, W. Brown (D), G. Fuller, G. W. Goddard, J. Goddard, G. K. Gossop, W. Hall, W. Jackson, J. R. Mackrill, C. Oliver, G. Paddison (D), J. K. Riggall, G. E. Thompson, J. Whiteley, M. Wilkin ; **Treasurer and Secretary**, Mr. J. H. Armstrong. **Chapel and Seat Stewards** : Messrs. J. H. Armstrong and Ed. Markham ; **Harmonium**, Messrs. Allen and W. H. Herbert ; **Choir Master**, Mr. S. Lee. **Society Stewards** : Messrs. T. Raddings and T. Watson. **Poor Stewards** : Messrs. J. Buston and T. Chester. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. T. Bavin (J), J. Curtis, W. Herbert, E. Markham, T. Watson, J. M. Young, Mrs. Lester (J), Misses Wood and Wright (J). **Sunday School** : **Superintendents**, Messrs. W. Herbert and T. Watson ; **Secretaries**, Messrs. William Forman and S. Lee ; **Treasurer**, Mr. G. O. Clarke ; **Librarians**, Messrs. E. Frayne, jun., and A. Pinchbeck. **Juvenile Missionary Association** : **Treasurer and Secretary**, Mr. Taylor. **Band of Hope** : **President**, Rev. Geo. Lester ; **Conductor and Secretary**, Mr. Ed. Frayne, jun. ; **Registrar**, Miss Harris ; **Treasurer**, Mr. E. Markham. **Ladies' Sewing Meeting** : **Treasurer**, Mrs. Buston ; **Secretary**, Mrs. Walker. **Mission Band and Benevolent Society** : **Officers**, Messrs. J. M. Young and Geo. Wright.

SOUTH PARADE (*Trust Deed dated 1881*).

Trustees : Messrs. Jas. Bennett, William Bennett, J. K. Capes, C. Coates, M. Dawson (D), G. W. B. Gee, E. L. Grange, William Hall, C. A. Marshall, Drury Mason (D), G. Stampe, A. Stephenson, Joseph Smith, Joseph Smethurst. **Treasurer**, Mr. Charles A. Marshall, J.P. ; **Secretaries**, Messrs. Geo. Stampe and Jos. Smethurst, C.C. **Chapel and Seat Stewards** : Messrs. T. Markham and T. Savage ; **Organ**, Mr. J. M. Benton. **Society Stewards** : Messrs. W. Shaw and J. M. Benton. **Poor Stewards** : Messrs. John Potts and W. Greenfield. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. Branton, J. M. Benton (J), Ellis, Leigh (J), Mumby, Sleight, Smith, Wharton, J. H. White ; Misses A. Carter, Keal (J), and Marsden. — **Sunday School** : **Superintendents**, Messrs. J. H. White and J. M. Benton ;

Treasurer, Mr. Councillor C. F. Carter; *Secretaries*, Messrs. W. Greenfield, T. Markham and G. E. Shaw. *Juvenile Missionary Association*: Messrs. G. H. White and C. Satin. *Band of Hope*: *President*, Rev. W. George; *Conductor*, Mr. H. A. Rooke; *Secretary*, Mr. Leigh; *Treasurer*, Mr. T. Savage. *Ladies' Sewing Meeting*: *Treasurer*, Mrs. C. F. Carter; *Secretary*, Mrs. Greenfield. *Mission Band*: *Officers*, Messrs. Davidson and W. A. Smith. *Christian Association*: *President*, Rev. W. George; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. J. H. White, C. Sleight, and J. M. Benton; *Treasurer*, Mr. Geo. Shaw; *Secretaries*, Messrs. G. H. White and H. A. Rooke; *Branch Secretary to Foreign Missions*, Mr. W. Greenfield.

CLEETHORPES (*Deed at time of New Chapel, June 1885*).

Trustees: Messrs. J. Appleyard, T. Appleyard, J. S. Barnaby, R. Barnaby, W. Burt, T. T. Chapman (D), J. Drewry, J. Hay (D), G. Jennings, T. Leesing, W. Lucas, J. R. Mackrill, A. Osborne, R. Osborne, W. Osborne, C. Watmough, T. Willerton (D), M. Wright; *Treasurer*, Mr. James S. Barnaby; *Secretary*, Mr. Walwyn T. Chapman. **Chapel and Seat Stewards**: Messrs J. S. Barnaby and W. Lucas; *Organist*, Mr. F. W. Mackrill; *Choir Secretary*, Mr. W. Fox; *Treasurer*, Mr. F. W. Mackrill. **Society Stewards**: Messrs. W. Drewry and W. Lucas. **Poor Stewards**: Messrs. C. Osborne and F. W. Mackrill. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. J. Appleyard, T. Appleyard, J. S. Barnaby, J. R. Mackrill, R. Osborne, J. Paddison (J), Rev. W. Shaw, J. Would, M. Wright; Mesdames Lucas and Would.—**Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. T. Leesing, J. Paddison, and J. Young; *Secretaries*, Mr. W. T. Chapman (Com.), Mr. C. Winks (School); *Treasurer*, Mr. F. Humberstone. **Juvenile Missionary Association**: Messrs. F. Humberstone and C. Winks. **Band of Hope**: *President*, Mr. J. Winks; *Secretary*, Mr. G. Page; *Treasurer*, Mr. J. Banister. **Mission Band**: *President*, Mr. J. Ingham; *Secretary*, Mr. F. W. Strickland. **Ladies' Sewing Meetings**: (Chapel) *President*, Mrs. Shaw, *Treasurer*, Mrs. J. S. Barnaby, *Secretaries*, Misses Shaw and J. Barnaby; (Organ) *Treasurer*, Mrs. F. Mashford, *Secretary*, Mrs. J. Ingham. **Christian Association**: *President*, Rev. W. Shaw; *Vice-Presidents*, Messrs. H. Sleight and W. Sinderson; *Treasurer*, Miss Chapman; *Secretary*, Mr. W. T. Chapman. **Foreign Missions**: *Treasurer*, Mr. W. T. Chapman; *Secretary*, Mr. W. Drewry.

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HOLTON-LE-CLAY (*Deed dated 24th May, 1886*).

Trustees : Messrs. R. Barnaby, J. Campion, W. Cook, W. J. Eden, R. Hay, G. K. Gossop, Joseph Smith, J. Stephenson, F. Turner. **Treasurer and Chapel Steward** : Mr. Richard Hay. **Harmonium** : Misses Hay and Shaw. **Society Steward** : Mr. R. Hay. **Poor Steward** : Mr. G. Shaw. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. J. Campion and R. Hay. **Sunday School** : see Chapter VIII.

NORTH THORESBY (*New Deed executed in 1878*).

Trustees : Messrs. J. F. Andrew, H. Bennett, jun., W. Bennett, J. Campion, W. Cook, G. W. Goddard, S. Grant, E. Haith, H. Hall, H. T. Hay, J. K. Riggall, G. Stampe, C. Stephenson, I. Strawson (d); **Treasurer**, Mr. Chas. Stephenson. **Chapel and Seat Steward** : Mr. C. Stephenson. **Harmonium**, Miss K. Patchett. **Society Steward** : Mr. W. Raithby. **Poor Steward** : Mr. J. F. Broughton. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. J. F. Broughton and E. Haith. **Sunday School Officers** : Messrs. C. Stephenson and E. Haith, and Mrs. Raithby.

TETNEY (*Trust Deed dated 7th June, 1876*).

Trustees : Messrs. R. Barnaby, W. Bennett, D. Black, J. E. Bourne, S. Broadley, W. Cook, W. J. Eden, G. Foster, J. Grimoldby, H. T. Hay, R. Hay, T. Ingamells, G. Stampe, I. Strawson (d). **Treasurer**, Mr. H. T. Hay. **Chapel and Seat Stewards** : Messrs. H. T. Hay and A. E. Rainford. **Harmonium**, Miss S. Willmer and Mr. W. Haith. **Society Stewards** : Messrs. G. Burgess and T. Sharpe. **Poor Steward** : Mr. J. Tongue. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. H. T. Hay, A. E. Rainford, and J. Tongue, Miss Broadley (j). **Sunday School** : *Superintendents*, Messrs. T. Sharpe and F. Willmer. **Secretary**, Mr. F. Willmer. **Treasurer**, Mr. T. Sharpe.

HUMBERSTONE.

Chapel and Society Steward (*Harmonium also*) : Mr. J. F. Andrew. **Poor Steward** : Mr. Drewry. **Class Leaders** : Messrs. Haith and Smith. **Sunday School Officers** : Messrs. G. Haith and J. Surfleet, Z. Gray and Mrs. Cheeseman.

SCARTHO (*Deed bears date 16th Dec., 1868*).

Trustees : Messrs. A. Abraham, Jas. Bennett (d.), W. Chilton, J. Coatsworth (d), W. Cook, W. J. Eden, J. Guy, C. J. Hay, R. Hay, J. Heaton, jun., W. Jessup, W. Mumby, D. Parker,

T. F. Parker (D), W. S. Parker, J. Higson Smith. **Treasurer and Chapel Steward**: Mr. W. Chilton. *Harmonium*, Miss A. Abraham. **Society and Poor Steward**: Mrs. Chilton. **Class Leader**: Mr. Pottage. **Sunday School**: *Superintendent*, Mr. W. S. Parker; *Assistants*, Messrs. J. A. Harry, W. Fytche, and others.

GREAT COATES (*Deed dated 18th April, 1881*).

Trustees: Messrs. J. Bagley, G. Campey, W. Cook, W. J. Eden, W. Jackson, S. M'Aulay, J. K. Riggall, G. Stampe, A. Stephenson, T. Stephenson (D), Jas. Whiteley. **Chapel and Seat Stewards**: Messrs. J. Bagley and Jabez Riggall. *Harmonium*, Mr. W. Wells. **Society Steward**: Mr. J. Riggall. **Poor Steward**: Mr. J. Smith. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. Bagley and Riggall. **Band of Hope**: *Conductor*, Mr. W. Wright; *Secretary*, Miss Bayram.

STALLINGBOROUGH (*Deed dated 27th Dec., 1866*).

Trustees: Messrs. C. Allinson, H. Bennett, J. Bennett (D), Jos. Bennett, C. Burkinshaw, W. Coates, John Coatsworth (D), J. Coatsworth (D), J. K. Riggall, T. Shelton, J. Higson Smith, F. Sowerby (D), G. Willows. **Treasurer and Chapel Steward**: Mr. T. Shelton. *Harmonium*, Miss Robinson. **Society Stewards**: Messrs. G. Lingard and Mumby. **Poor Steward**: Mr. J. Barnaby. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. Addison, Bratley, Sleight, Vessey, Waller, and Miss Robinson (J). **Sunday School**: *Superintendents*, Messrs. J. Barnaby, C. Mumby, G. Hill, C. Cox; *Secretary*, Mr. A. Stephenson; *Treasurer*, Mr. F. Craven. **Juvenile Missionary Association**: *Secretary*, Miss Robinson.

GRAINSBY.

Chapel Affairs: Mr. Sands. *School and Harmonium*, Mrs. Johnson. **Society Steward**: Mr. Scarborough. **Poor Steward**: Mr. Hayes. **Class Leaders**: Messrs. J. Appleyard and Lewis.

Grimsby Wesleyan Abstinence Society.

President, Mr. J. H. Armstrong. **Vice-President**, Mr. J. Chatterton. **Treasurer**, Mr. J. Sutton. **Secretaries**, Messrs. Bett and W. Fytche.

The Grimsby Bible and Domestic Mission, and

The Grimsby Benevolent Society

are philanthropic institutions of an undenominational character; but, as their printed reports show, they are chiefly officered by Wesleyans.

The future of Methodism in this circuit rests, under God, with those who are or shall hereafter be entrusted with its pastoral care and its Society offices. Hitherto a fine *esprit de corps* has characterised its band of Christian soldiers. The large influx of persons into the town from various parts of the country has rendered the conditions of both municipal and church life somewhat peculiar. It has been impossible for new-comers to know much of the history of Methodism in and around Grimsby, and therefore little likely that they could cherish the same sort of interest in its movements that many had felt in the work of our Church in the respective places from which they removed. The task of preparing this volume has been undertaken chiefly with a view to stimulate circuit feeling by placing information in the hands of the hundreds of persons who, each in his own way, may promote the further prosperity and development of our beloved cause. In so far as this is accomplished will the pains of the author be rewarded. Now, in the words of good Thomas Fuller, he thus concludes :—

“MAY THE FAULTS OF THIS BOOK REDOUND TO MYSELF, THE PROFIT TO OTHERS, THE GLORY TO GOD.”

NOTE A (p. 15).

There was a royal ordinance, Henry VII. (a°.14), passed in 1499, "to the relief and sustentation of the King's borough of Grimsby," which provides that "the butchers of this Francheis, and all others that keep slaughter shops . . . shall make once yearly, before the mayor and his burgesses, one Bull-baiting at a convenient time of the year, according to the custom of this Francheis before used, upon pain of forfeiting 6s. 8d."

Not content with this, the town had its bye-law on the matter, as follows:—"That no butcher shall, in future, kill a bull within this borough, nor shall any bull's flesh be sold, or any bull brought into the market for sale, unless it has been baited openly before the mayor and burgesses, under a penalty for every default of 6s. 8d."

NOTE B (p. 42).

"These are to certify whom it may concern That a Certificate bearing Date the Fifteenth Day of October instant, under the hands of George Tizard, Thomas Capiter, Anthony Ackrill and others, directed to the Rev. George Reynolds, Doctor of Laws, Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry of Lincoln, for appropriating a House in the Town and Borough of Great Grimsby in the County and Archdeaconry of Lincoln, late in the possession of the Right Honourable the Lord Luxborough and now leased to Thomas Capiter, William Robinson and others for a place of religious Worship of Protestant Dissenters dissenting from the Church of England commonly called Independants, was registered in the Consistory Court of the said Archdeacon, at Lincoln, on the Twenty-seventh Day of October in the Year of Our Lord One Thousand Seven Hundred and Fifty-nine."—*W. Jepson, N. P. Dep. Regr.*

NOTE C (p. 122).

Table showing Present Position of Wesleyan-Methodism in EAST LINCOLNSHIRE.

CIRCUITS.	No of Members.	Minis-ters.	Local Preac.	Class Leaders.	S. S. Officers & Teachers.	Sunday Scholars.	Value of Trust Property.	Foreign Missions.
GRIMSBY was made a Circuit in 1765...	1850	4	44	93	427	3,150	30,604	£ 315 s. 6 d. 5
Horncastle from Grimsby „ 1786...	920	2	37	54	208	1,310	13,971	113 3 10
Boston „ Horncastle „ 1795...	1189	3	50	83	313	1,892	19,751	326 8 5
Barton „ Grimsby „ 1796...	1378	4	55	96	338	1,486	21,696	341 10 4
Spalding „ Horncastle „ 1797...	350	2	26	26	113	748	9,764	62 7 11
Louth „ Grimsby „ 1799..	1526	3	65	87	282	1,337	12,425	300 4 8
Spilsby „ Horncastle „ 1802...	700	2	30	50	188	955	12,043	140 7 1
Alford „ Horncastle „ 1813...	1518	3	47	78	366	1,607	15,370	296 16 2
Market Rasen „ Grimsby „ 1813...	789	2	43	56	175	976	12,442	183 16 8
Brigg „ Winterton „ 1815...	876	3	42	55	255	1,444	11,758	138 11 3
Wainfleet „ Boston „ 1840...	728	2	26	45	202	1,254	9,046	88 8 2
Coningsby „ Spilsby „ 1844...	584	1	15	37	140	876	4,700	102 11 10
Bardney „ Horncastle „ 1867...	518	1	17	31	100	657	5,726	73 9 10
Caistor, etc. „ Grimsby „ 1868...	720	2	21	43	139	614	10,161	140 4 4
Holbeach „ Spalding „ 1873...	182	1	14	14	90	599	4,266	25 9 11
TOTALS March, 1889...	13828	35	532	848	3346	18,905	193,725	2648 17 10

Boston disappears from stations in 1797 : reappears in 1812. Spalding disappears in 1799 : appears again in 1813.

NOTE D. (p. 122)

GENERAL STATISTICS OF METHODISM.

	MINISTERS.	MEMBERS
		(incl. those on trial).
Wesleyan Methodists—		
Great Britain	1,975	514,790
Ireland	234	25,960
Foreign Missions	375	37,778
French Conference	30	1,541
South African Conference	173	36,876
West Indian Conferences	89	48,082
Australasian Conferences	605	78,060
Methodist New Connexion—		
England	181	33,439
Ireland	8	1,013
Missions	7	1,495
Bible Christians—		
England	179*	26,646
Australia, &c.	89	5,759
Primitive Methodists—		
England, &c....	1,038	194,347
United Methodist Free Churches—		
Home Districts	340	74,103
Foreign Districts	69	11,356
Wesleyan Reform Union	14	8,683
Independent Methodists	...	6,065
		(Excl. of 313 Preachers).
United States—		
<i>Episcopal Churches.</i>		
Methodist Episcopal Church	14,135	2,093,935
Meth. Episcopal Church, South	4,530	1,102,926
African Meth. Episcopal Church	2,550	405,000†
African Meth. Episc. Zion Church	2,110	314,000†
Colrd. Meth. Episc. Ch. of America	1,729	165,000†
Evangelical Association...	1,121	137,697
United Brethren Church	1,566	195,278
Union American Meth. Episc. Ch.	40	3,660
<i>Non-Episcopal Churches.</i>		
Methodist Protestant Church	1,570	129,263
Other Non-Episcopal Churches	2,502	61,314
Canada—		
Methodist Church in Canada	1,558	212,770
Totals	38,817	5,927,149

Total of Ministers and Members, 5,965,966.

N.B.—All these returns are the latest procurable, but they are not all those of last year. Members of Junior Society classes are included where such classes exist.

* Inclusive of Supernumeraries in Australia.

† Estimated, but the official returns.

THE WESLEYS IN LINCOLNSHIRE.

I.

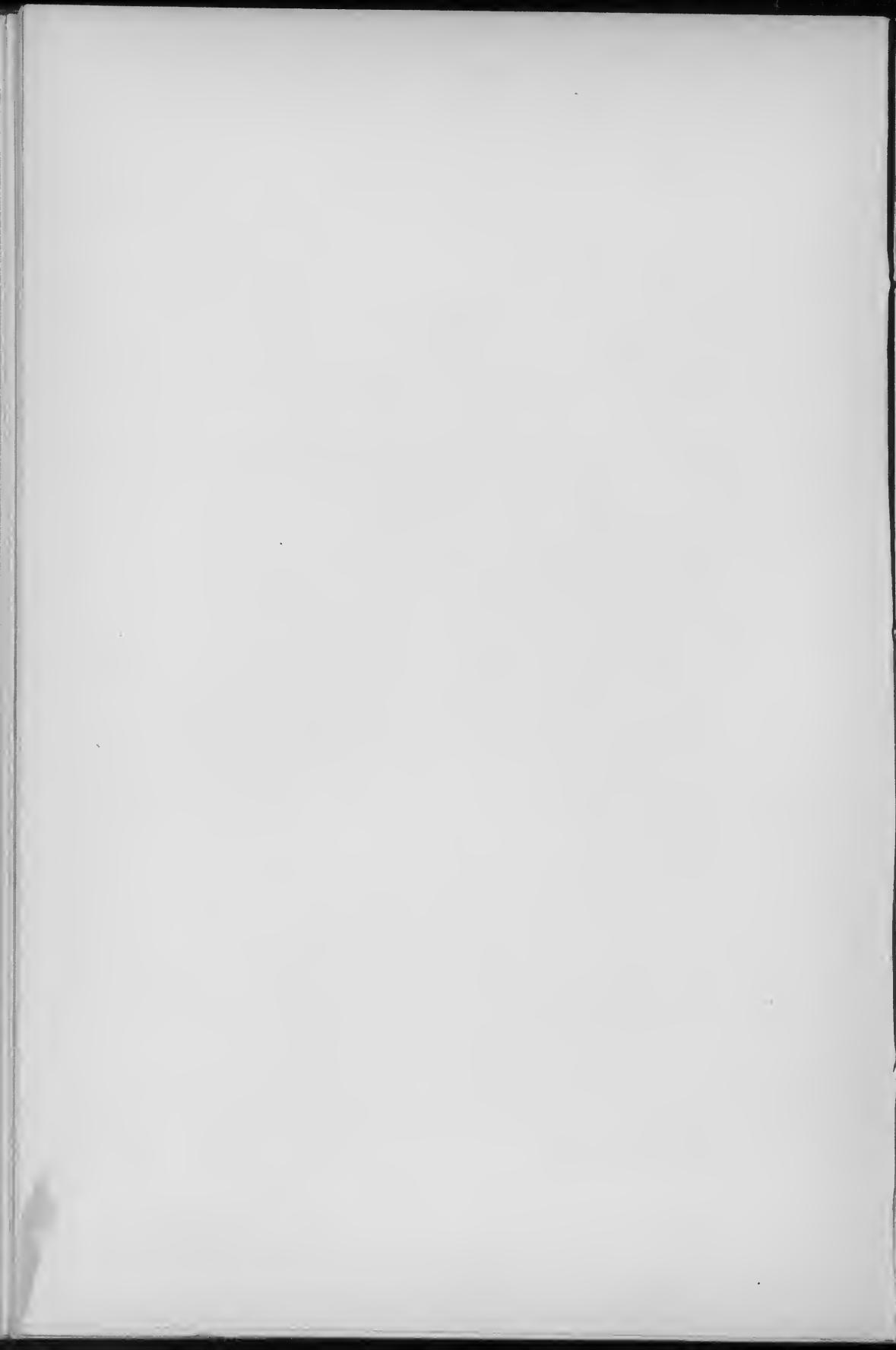
*SAMUEL WESLEY'S FIRST BENEFICE :
SOUTH ORMSBY.*

II.

*SAMUEL WESLEY'S SECOND BENEFICE :
EPWORTH.*

III.

*JOHN WESLEY'S CURACY IN THE ISLE
OF AXHOLME.*



I.

SAMUEL WESLEY'S FIRST BENEFICE: SOUTH ORMSBY.

IT is difficult to fix the exact date at which the Rev. Samuel Wesley, removing from a London curacy, took up his abode at South Ormsby, in Lincolnshire. Dr. George Smith, in his "History of Methodism" (vol. i., p. 71) says: "There can be no doubt that Mr. Wesley went to reside at South Ormsby in the year 1690. His predecessor in the living was buried on January 19th of this year, and Mr. Wesley's handwriting is found in the register on the following 26th of August." But according to the Bishop's register at Lincoln, it was on June 25th, 1691, that the new rector took possession. Some Wesleyan archæologist may solve the difficulty for us, or the discrepancy is explained by the fact that because a clergyman's name appears in the parish register it does by no means certainly follow that he has as yet come into residence. Or it may even be that 1691 is written, in the Bishop's register, in error. Awaiting further light, if that be necessary, turn we

now to the rector's description of his home and of his life therein. Concerning these he writes thus :--

“ In a mean cot, composed of reeds and clay,
Wasting in sighs the uncomfortable day ;
Near where the inhospitable Humber roars,
Devouring by degrees the neighbouring shores.
Let earth go where it will, I'll not repine,
Nor can unhappy be while heaven is mine.”

What may have provoked such an outburst of mingled lament and resignation it is not given us to know ; such as are learned in psychoiology may, perhaps, explain.

But two of the lines quoted above are calculated to convey, however unintentionally, an entirely false impression as to the situation of South Ormsby. Whatever depredations the “inhospitable Humber” may have been guilty of, Samuel Wesley's “mean cot” was sufficiently far removed to be in no sort of danger or inconvenience thereby. The Lincolnshire shore of the estuary has never suffered so severely as has that on the Yorkshire side, where flourishing towns, like Ravenspurn, have been inundated and swept away. But had the havoc in Lincolnshire been ever so terrible, South Ormsby was yet safe enough. It is four-and-twenty miles from the Humber, fourteen from the shores of the North Sea, whilst the Wolds stand like mighty bastions between this sheltered village and the devastating waves. However, Parnassus and the Ordnance-map show no affinities.

South Ormsby is scarcely more than two miles north-east of Somersby, where Tennyson was born; it stands, in fact, within that very "circle of the hills" from which the memory of the Laureate has not yet faded. His description of the Wolds, with their "calm and deep peace," and of

"The silent wooded places
By the home that gave him birth,"

are scarcely less true of South Ormsby than of Somersby itself,

"The well-belovèd place
Where first he gazed upon the sky."

Such as are familiar with Tennyson's pictures of his birth-land know that this is no region of gloomy fen or dreary marsh, but a place of

"Woods that belt the grey hillside."

South Ormsby Hall is a spacious mansion, pleasantly situated in the centre of a well-wooded park of 120 acres, containing several extensive avenues, one of which, known as the "Lime Tree Walk," is of great beauty. A small lake, which extends for some distance in front of the mansion, forms also a pleasing feature of the park. For generations the Massingberds have been the owners of this property, but have not always resided at the Hall. From a note which Mr. Tyerman appends to his "Life and Times of Samuel Wesley," we gather that, whilst the Marquis of Normanby was probably the means of

obtaining for Samuel Wesley the rectory of South Ormsby, the real *patrons* of the living were certain members of this family. In the same note a story, which has been often repeated upon the authority of Mr. Wesley's son John, is corrected. The story goes as follows : "The Marquis of Normanby had a house in the parish of South Ormsby, where a woman who lived with him usually resided. This lady *would* be intimate with my mother, whether *she* would or not. To such an intercourse my father would not submit. Coming in one day, and finding this obtrusive visitant sitting with my mother, he went up to her, took her by the hand, and very fairly handed her out. The nobleman resented the affront so outrageously as to make it necessary for my father to resign the living." Mr. Tyerman says that the story as thus told is "not quite accurate. The house of the patron was rented not by the Marquis of Normanby, but by the Earl of Castleton ; and it was this nobleman who so resented the affront to his mistress that Samuel Wesley found it expedient to resign his living." With this explanation before us we can understand how it was possible for Samuel Wesley to retain, for some years after the incident referred to, his position as chaplain to the Marquis, to dedicate to the Marchioness in 1701 his "History of the Old and New Testament," and to accept from them gifts of money to the relief of his impecuniosity. Apart from this explanation Samuel Wesley's memory would have been exposed to the

suspicion of inconsistency, a quality not to be associated with a man so high-souled and good as he is known to have been.

The rectory-house at South Ormsby in which the Wesleys resided stood between the church and the hall, near to the parcel of ground where the school-children of to-day frolic during the play-time. The present rectory occupies a pleasant, elevated situation, where are the "South Ormsby trees," a landmark for all the country side. Wesley described his abode as a "mean cot"; and if the dwelling was in the style of architecture still represented in the antiquated cottages—relics of bygone days—it was an object which any painter of English rural life might with advantage have transferred to canvas. Probably it was picturesqne enough, with its white walls and thatched roof and flower garden, but it was neither spacious nor comfortable. The oldest inhabitant of the village can "mind" the old rectory; but as he knew it the house was both larger and better than when Samuel Wesley, as one of the prominent writers of his day, toiled within it at his literary tasks, and the mother of the Wesleys dandled on her knee the future master of Tiverton Grammar School and author of the hymn beginning—

"The morning flowers display their sweets."

No remnant of the old rectory is now to be seen. There is not even one stone left upon another to

mark the place where it stood. The green sward—part of the park inclosure now—covers what was once the rector's garden. A flourishing acacia stands as one of the few memorials of a spot where it may be supposed that the man of letters found at times a rest from literary toils. In the spring-time the snowdrops peep out from amongst the grass, as if to recall the sweet memory of that model mother who had

“ . . . Not a thought, a touch,
But pure as lines of green that streak the white
Of the first snowdrop's inner leaves. . . . ”

A few dim traditions of Samuel Wesley still linger amongst the villagers; and some years since his name and opinions were put before them in the “Parish Magazine,” lest haply they should become disloyal to the Church as by law established. It is not known that John Wesley ever visited the village, nor is there a Wesleyan chapel therein.

Driby, Ketsby, and the vicarage of Calceby are now annexed to South Ormsby; and the living, worth £50 in Samuel Wesley's time, is stated to “be of the value of £800, including eighty-five acres of glebe, with residence.”

The church, which is dedicated to St. Leonard, is built of Somersby sandstone, and consists of chancel, nave, south aisle, a small chapel or chantry (now used as a burial-place for the Massingberd family), and an embattled tower with four pinnacles; it

contains five bells. The church was re-roofed and re-pewed some eighteen years since. Within it are brasses to the memory of Sir William Skipworth and Agnes his wife (1485), monuments to the Massingberds, and a stained-glass window at the east in memory of a rector who died in 1873. Such changes as have been made have not materially altered the edifice; it stands, save for its modern pews, much as it stood when Samuel Wesley knew it, whilst its massive round piers carry back one's thoughts to an age greatly more remote than his.

Five or six children were born to Samuel Wesley during his residence at South Ormsby. Of these, three, named respectively Susannah, Annesley and Jedidiah (twins), died in infancy, and were interred in this churchyard. They lie not far from the church porch, but no gravestone marks their resting-place.

The South Ormsby children who survived were Emilia, of whom her brother John said that she had "strong sense, much wit, a prodigious memory, and a talent for poetry"; Susannah (a *second* child bearing the mother's name), described by Mr. Wesley's biographer as good-natured, very facetious, and a little romantic; and Mary, who, though she became deformed, yet had, it is said, an exquisitely beautiful face, and a temper so humble, obliging, even and amiable as to make her the favourite and delight of the whole family.

Samuel Wesley had taken his Bachelor's degree

at Oxford in 1688 ; his Master's degree he took at Cambridge (1694) during his residence at South Ormsby.

In his pursuits as an author he was "in labours more abundant." To this period belong most of his articles for the *Athenian Gazette*, his contributions to the "Young Student's Library," a considerable portion of his "Life of Christ," which he dedicated to Queen Mary, and his "Elegies to the Queen and Archbishop" (Tillotson).

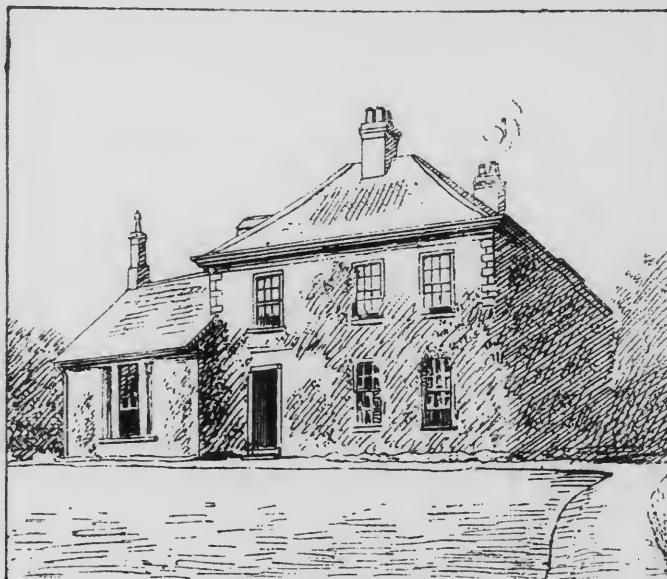
Nor did he neglect his flock. He had set before himself a lofty and just ideal of the Christian minister, and both as a preacher and as a pastor he laboured conscientiously to attain to it. At a time when many of the rural clergy were, unhappily, little better than a disgrace to their profession, Samuel Wesley maintained his integrity, and sought by precept and example to adorn the doctrine of God his Saviour.

In his home, in his pastoral work, and in his literary labours, his young wife—as beautiful as she was accomplished, as skilful as she was godly—was his true helpmeet. "No man," says Southey, "was ever more suitably mated than Samuel Wesley." The rector has described her, as she was in the South Ormsby days, in the following lines :—

" She graced my humble roof, and blest my life,
Blest me by a far greater name than wife ;
Yet still I bore an undisputed sway,
Nor was 't her task, but pleasure to obey ;

Scarce thought, much less could act, what I denied,
In our low house there was no room for pride ;
Nor need I e'er direct what still was right,
She studied my convenience and delight.
Nor did I for her care ungrateful prove,
But only used my power to show my love.
Whate'er she asked I gave, without reproach or
grudge,
For still the reason asked, and I was judge.
All my commands, requests at her fair hands,
And her requests to me were all commands.
To others' thresholds rarely she'd incline,
Her house her pleasure was, and she was mine ;
Rarely abroad, or never, but with me,
Or when by pity called, or charity."

At South Ormsby Mr. Wesley did not, as afterwards at Epworth, come into conflict with his parishioners through indiscretion in political matters ; nor had he then entered, to any considerable extent, into those controversies which so greatly embittered some of his later years. All things considered, poor as was his living and mean as was his dwelling, Samuel Wesley probably never enjoyed at any part of his career greater pleasure or larger satisfaction than that which he experienced during his five or six years of residence in this village, which (as Mr. Tyerman has said) will always be an attractive place to all interested in the history of the Wesley family.



EPWORTH RECTORY.

(Built after the fire of 1709.)

II.

SAMUEL WESLEY'S SECOND BENEFICE: EPWORTH.

EARLY in 1697, the Rev. Samuel Wesley, having been rector of South Ormsby, Lincolnshire, for about six years, removed thence to Epworth, in that same county. There accompanied the rector and his wife to their new abode four young children, named respectively Samuel, Emilia, Susannah, and Mary. The exact date of the removal is not to be traced, owing to the destruction of the Epworth registers in the fire which occurred at the rectory in 1709.

The environment of Epworth bears little resemblance to that of South Ormsby. The wolds, with their "calm and deep peace," were exchanged for a country to which such epithets as "attractive," "beautiful," or "charming" are not to be applied. The Isle of Axholme, in which Epworth is situate (once a veritable river island, now an island in name only), is flat in the extreme. The Westmorland man who came into Lincolnshire and approved it, because "there ain't no mucky mountains," would surely have found a paradise around Epworth. Healthy it may be. In Epworth churchyard, "within a space of less than twelve feet square, may be seen a group of six headstones, recording the deaths of seven persons, of different families, whose united ages amount to 520 years." Longevity, however, is attributable to other conditions than salubrious air merely. If Epworth possesses few marked natural features, the writings of Peck, Read, Stonehouse, and Overton show that it is not destitute of historical associations—chief amongst which is the residency of the Wesleys.

Epworth is a town, at least in name; and, whatever may have befallen its market, it still boasts a *market-place*. With but few exceptions, Lincolnshire towns are not given to rapid growth. The increase in the population of the entire county during the 1871-81 decade was but 33,395, whilst Nottinghamshire increased by 72,226, and "the

“premier county” of York added to its population nearly 450,000 souls.* Epworth had a population in Samuel Wesley’s time of “about 2000”; it has “about 2000” now; and seems likely to have “about 2000” so long as its nearest railway stations are distant $4\frac{1}{2}$ and $5\frac{1}{2}$ miles respectively.

Its places of worship are St. Andrew’s Church and a small mission church; Baptist, New Connexion and Primitive Methodist Chapels; and the new Wesley Memorial Chapel—to assist which many of my readers did journey to Epworth on the occasion of the laying of the foundation-stones on the 20th September, 1888, and the dedicatory services on the 5th September, 1889.

The church of St. Andrew stands on a slight eminence on the north side of the town, and is approached by an antiquated flagged causeway, on both sides of which are trees—successors, probably, of those known to certain of the Wesleys two hundred years ago. From the churchyard an extensive and pleasing view may be obtained.

“Northward are to be seen the Yorkshire Wolds, on the other side of the Humber, with the high grounds near Alkborough and Burton Wood; eastward, Messingham and the town of Kirton-in-Lindsey; on the west, the distant hills of

* Census of England and Wales: Preliminary Report, 1881, p. 5.

Derbyshire, the church of Laughten-in-le-Morthen, etc."

Epworth church is stone-built, and consists of a nave, aisles, chancel, a chantry—now used as a vestry,—and a pinnacled tower, in which six bells were hung in 1814. Twenty years since the aisles were re-roofed and new seats were introduced. The entrance to the rood loft remains, and portions of the screen may be seen in the reading-desk. The most striking features of the architecture belong to the chancel, the chantry, and the north porch. Such is the edifice with which the ministrations of Samuel Wesley were associated for thirty-nine years.

The living of Epworth was conferred on him in accordance with some wish or promise of Queen Mary, to whose "most sacred majesty" he had dedicated (in 1693) his "Heroic Poem in Ten Books." It was proffered "without any solicitation on his part, or without his once thinking of such a favour." The living was, nominally, worth £200, or about £800 as reckoned by the present value of money.

The rectory, like most of the houses at Epworth at that time, was meanly built; but it is incorrect to speak of it as "a miserable hovel." Observe the description of it in the terrier, bearing date 1607:—"It consists of five bayes, but all of mud and plaster, the whole building being contrived into three stories and disposed into seven chief rooms, kitchen,

hall, parlour, butterie, and three large upper rooms, and some others of common use; a little garden empailed between the stone wall and the south, a barn, a dove-coate, and a hemp kiln."

In July 1702 this dwelling was partially destroyed by fire, to the rector's serious loss and great embarrassment. He was already pressed by debt, and quite unequal to the expenditure which the re-erection of the house necessitated. What with debt, persecution occasioned by his injudicious action in electioneering, losses in farming, and unwise in worldly affairs, his circumstances were such as would have crushed most men; to him they occasioned much anxiety and concern. The honour of being thrice elected "Convocation Man" for the diocese of Lincoln could hardly have fallen upon one more worthy to receive it, but to a man of slender means it meant an honour which he could ill afford to sustain. A good conscience, a cheerful spirit, and a strong faith in overruling Providence, saved him from despair. He must be a light-hearted man who can be facetious over the arrival of twins. Twice, however, that opportunity came to Samuel Wesley. How the advent of Annesley and Jedidiah was announced we know not; but writing his kind and faithful friend, the Archbishop of York, he says: "Last night my wife brought me a *few* children. There are but *two* yet. . . . We have had four in two years and a day, three of which are living."

Surely he deserves to rank among "men worth remembering." From time to time, pecuniary assistance reached him from such as honoured his private character and approved his literary work.

The story of his separation from his loved and loving wife on account of a supposed difference touching King William's right has been so ably refuted as not to require notice here. Mr. Tyerman has shown—as we think conclusively—that a twelve-months' absence, as the story has it, was a thing not only improbable, but impossible. Attendance at Convocation, with the journeys it involved, and literary engagements in town, are of themselves sufficient to account for such absence from Epworth as can be proved. A story so damaging to Samuel Wesley's reputation as a husband and a Christian could never have got into circulation if the rebutting evidence known to-day had been available a century since.

Visitors to the Epworth rectory were but few; some of those who did come were none too amiable—Matthew Wesley, to wit. But there was always sufficient in the resources of the inmates to prevent dulness. The rector was a student, but not a recluse; no ascetic, he mingled freely with his children both in their studies and their innocent diversions. His wit and humour, his love of music and his conversational powers are well known. Mrs. Wesley can never be forgotten. The nobility of

spirit with which she accepted the privations of her lot, her loving and intelligent care for her husband and children, her culture and accomplishments, and her godly zeal, entitle her to a foremost place among “Eminent Women.”

“Grace was in all her steps, heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love.”

Of the nineteen Wesley children, one was born in London, six at South Ormsby, twelve at Epworth. Three sons—Samuel, John and Charles—and seven daughters grew up to maturity. They inherited, though not in equal degree, those qualities which have rendered their parents famous. Such amenities as belong to culture, vivacity and wit were never lacking in that rectory.

Samuel Wesley’s literary labours at Epworth included “The Pious Communicant,” “An Epistle concerning Poetry,” “History of the Old and New Testaments” (in verse), “Dissertations on the Book of Job,” etc.

“He sung how God the Saviour deigned to expire,
With Vida’s piety, though not his fire ;
Deduced his Maker’s praise from age to age,
Through the long annals of the sacred page ;
And not inglorious was the poet’s fate,
Liked and rewarded by the good and great :
For gracious smiles, not pious Anne denied,
And beauteous Mary blessed him when she died.”

(From the *Elegy* of S. Wesley, jun.)

The fire of 1709, from which John Wesley, then a child of six, was so narrowly saved, has become historical. The fire was, doubtless, the work of some malevolent incendiary. Mr. H. P. Parker's picture—if somewhat a fancy one—keeps the scene in mind in thousands of Methodist households. The present Rectory was built by Samuel Wesley. (See illustration at head of chapter.) It stands very nearly as he left it—"Jeffrey's attic" included.

The strange noises at the rectory have received considerable attention, with the result that numerous explanations as to the origin have been forthcoming. Each of my readers will probably have already drawn his own conclusion.

Notwithstanding the persecutions he suffered and the opposition he encountered, Mr. Wesley proved himself a faithful preacher and pastor. The present rector (Canon Overton) says he "left his mark upon his once turbulent, but by him much reformed parish."

Samuel Wesley died on the 25th day of April, 1735, aged seventy-two. "His death-bed scene was exquisitely beautiful." A plain grit tombstone, supported now by stonework, marks the place where they laid him, on the south side of the church, near the chancel. "As he lived so he died, in the true catholic faith of the Holy Trinity in unity, and that Jesus Christ is God Incarnate and the only Saviour of mankind."

III.

JOHN WESLEY'S CURACY IN THE ISLE OF AXHOLME (1727-29).

“ Fortune has fixed thee in a place
Debarred of wisdom, wit, and grace ;
High births and virtue equally they scorn,
As asses dull, on dunghills born ;
Impervious as the stones their heads are found,
Their rage and hatred steadfast as the ground.”

SUCH were the words in which “saucy little Hetty” Wesley described Wroot and its people. Her sister Emilia, with certain other members of the family, was already resident there ; her brother John was expected soon to arrive from Oxford as curate to his father, who now held the living of Wroot along with that of Epworth. Mehetabel Wesley, like most writers of the period, was nothing lacking in the art of satire. Pope had contributed to the prevailing idea that a writer, to be smart, must needs be sarcastic. To him satire was a

“ Sacred weapon, left for truth’s defence ;
Sole dread of folly, vice, and insolence.”

Although no native of Wroot figures in the list of "Lincolnshire Worthies," may we not indulge the hope that Hetty's description of the place was somewhat more scornful than was justified by fact? Anyhow, Addison's judgment is worthy to be pondered:—

"A satire should expose nothing but what is corrigible, and should make a due discrimination between those that are and those that are not the proper objects of it."

Possessing little of what is picturesque, the Isle of Axholme, in which Wroot is situate, has nevertheless received considerable attention from archæologists. It has been stated on good authority that

"not very long ago, when a body of young men were being examined for a certain Government office, one of the questions put was, 'State what are the boundaries of the Isle of Axholme, and why is it called an island?' Not one of the poor young fellows who were on that day under torture could give a satisfactory answer to the examiners."

Nor is such topographical default surprising, for what was once a veritable river-island, bounded by the Trent, the Idle, the Don, and the Torn, is now an island only in name. The Isle is about seventeen miles in length and five in breadth; it contains eight parishes, with about thirty hamlets.

Sir F. Palgrave has said that "Language adheres to the soil, when the lips which spake are resolved in dust." Thus, by means of its place-names, we trace the presence of the Celts, the Anglo-Saxons,

the Danes and the Normans in this district. The name Wroot (the earliest form of which is Wroe = Wr-oë) is derived from *vraa*, Danish for a corner, and *oë*, which means an island; a combination which well describes the place as it would be known to

“The heathen of the Northern Sea,”

who came hither. Later forms of the name are Wroyt, Wrot, and Wrotte; the final *t* is simply a phonetic ending.

The first mention of the place is in a deed of Roger de Mowbray's, in the early part of the reign of Henry I., in which he gives “all his possessions at Wroot, to God and the Monks of the blessed St. Mary at York.” At one time the entire district was unquestionably a forest. When the Dutchmen commenced the work of drainage, in the reign of Charles I., they encountered trunks of trees of enormous size—giants of the elder time. An oak which was disinterred measured 40 yards in length, and 4 in diameter at the great end; a fir measured 36 yards long, “besides the computed length thereof, which might well be 15 yards more.”* To this day the ploughshare still makes known the presence of these buried trees. Huge roots of fir, thus discovered, are frequently dragged out, sometimes several tons in weight. One such

* So says Rev. Abraham De la Pryme,

root is generally to be seen at the back of the dwellings, at which the cottagers hack away for their "kindling." How this forest came to be destroyed, who shall tell? There are traces of both fire and axe. The theory which finds most acceptance is, that the Romans destroyed it because it was infested by lawless Britons, who disturbed their garrisons and slaughtered their allies. One thing seems plain. The trees, falling in many instances across the watercourses, caused the streams to overflow the low-lying lands, so that what had been "a forest primeval" was converted into thousands of acres of swampy morass, sometimes flooded to the depth of several feet.

The drainage of this swamp by Vermuyden, in the seventeenth century, was so far successful that much submerged land was reclaimed and brought under cultivation. Other land, however, not flooded before, now became subject to inundation. This, along with alleged injustice in the apportionment of reclaimed lands, etc., gave rise to law-suits, commissions, and —what was worse—to depredations and outrage. The contumacious and insolent interference of John Lilbourne and his associates did nothing to improve the strained condition of affairs. The dispute, as to its more serious aspects, was only terminated by the introduction of an armed force, under Major-General Whalley, in 1657,—scarcely forty years before the arrival of Samuel Wesley in Epworth.

Bad blood disappears slowly. To recall these angry disputes is to have found some explanation of the turbulent condition of the neighbourhood, by reason of which John Wesley's father was so great a sufferer.

The living of Wroot was presented to Samuel Wesley when he was past sixty years of age. The village is distant five miles from Epworth, ten from Doncaster, twelve from Gainsborough. At present the population of the parish numbers about three hundred ; it was less than that in the early half of last century. The church known to the Wesleys was taken down nearly a hundred years ago. It was a small edifice of fourteenth-century date, and was dedicated to St. Pancras. The few ancient monuments which it contained were carefully preserved ; the boulder stones of which it was built do duty in Epworth as pavements for its streets ! The present ugly church is something of a survival of the erection of 1794 ; it provides accommodation for one hundred persons. From the churchyard a view is obtained of most of the Isle of Axholme, the level of Hatfield Chace, and the distant hills across the Trent. Not far from the church is the free school, founded and endowed in 1706 by one Henry Travis, of Michael Bassishaw, London. This school (though the present building is new) recalls a former master —John Romley, and one of his most distinguished pupils—John Whitelamb. Both master and pupil

assisted Samuel Wesley as amanuensis when he was engaged upon his "Dissertations on the Book of Job"; both were assisted by him in their preparation for the University; both served under him in the capacity of curate. Romley figures as the curate of Epworth who, in 1742, declined to allow John Wesley to preach in the church, and afterwards refused him the sacrament because he was "not fit." Whitelamb married Mary Wesley, and was for thirty-five years the rector of his native parish. A tiny gravestone marks his resting-place in the churchyard of Wroot. Nearly opposite to the site of what was once Samuel Wesley's house stands the rectory, a roomy, comfortable abode, with large, well-ordered gardens. There are Wesleyan and Primitive Methodist chapels in the village. Note this, ye friends of Methodist union!

Out of the twenty-eight persons of the parish of Wroot whose names appear in the County Directory, no less than eighteen are described as farmers! All through the Isle of Axholme small freeholders abound, holding from twenty acres to a single rood. They enjoy a sort of independence and importance, and are withal industrious and thrifty; for all that, the air of neatness and homeliness, which gives a charm to so many of our English villages, is lacking here. The roads are bad, the few hedges are generally untidy; the maxim of the Dutch that "paint costs nothing" does not here prevail. There

is but little flax grown now, the markets of the West Riding and of Lancashire offering inducement to the cultivation of more remunerative crops. The trees most frequently seen between Epworth and Wroot are the birch, which affects the peaty soil, and the white willow, which flourishes by "the watercourses." Concerning this latter, a native of the Isle expressed himself sententiously, in a bit of dialect which recalls that of "the Northern Farmer":—"Ay, them's the profitablest trees as is; one o' that soorta' 'ud graw a 'erse (horse) while a hesh (an ash) wur grawin' a saddle."

The neighbourhood bears but little resemblance to the Lincolnshire Fens or Marsh, and is quite unlike the Wolds, with many a

" . . . Hoary knoll of ash and haw
That hears the linnet's latest trill;
The quarry trenched along the hill,
And haunted by the wrangling daw."

The gift of Wroot did little to improve Samuel Wesley's circumstances. The income was small; the expenses were considerable. Moreover, Mr. Wesley was growing old and somewhat feeble. Journeys to and from Epworth had sometimes to be taken in bad weather, and with no better means of conveyance than an open boat. His letter to his son John (June 26th, 1727) vividly recalls the inconveniences of travelling before causeways had

been laid, or macadamised roads* even dreamed of:—

“I am *hipp'd* by my voyage and journey to and from Epworth last Sunday; being lamed with having my breeches too full of water, partly with a downfall from a thunder shower, and partly from the wash over the boat. . . . I wish the rain had not reached us on this side Lincoln; but we have it so continual that we have scarce one bank left, and I cannot possibly have one quarter of oats in all the levels. . . . We can neither go afoot nor on horseback to Epworth, but only by boat as far as Scawsit Bridge, and then walk over the common. . . . I would have your studies as little intermitted as possible, and I hope I shall do a month or two longer, as I'm sure I ought to do all I can both for God's family and my own; and when I find it sinks me, or perhaps a little before, I'll certainly send you word, with about a fortnight's notice.”

This letter was written in June 1727 at Wroot, where the rector frequently resided. What wonder that the aged father longed for such assistance as his son John—already in deacon's orders—could give him, thus lightening his labours and lessening his exposure! John Wesley, Fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, came accordingly in the August following, being now in his twenty-fifth year, and for upwards of two years acted as his father's curate. He made

* See Tyerman's “Samuel Wesley,” p. 334.

frequent visits to Epworth ; it was at Wroot, however, that he chiefly resided and laboured—"Wroot, out of England," as this remote and lonely spot was often called.

What was the character and what the result of his work can only be gathered from what we know of his spirit and habits of life : neither record nor tradition afford any light. His letters show with what becoming seriousness, self-examination and study he had prepared for ordination. The practical books which most influenced him at this time were Thomas à Kempis' "De Imitatione Christi," Jeremy Taylor's "Rules of Holy Living and Dying," William Law's "Christian Perfection" and "Serious Call." Sagacious parental advice, and his own good sense, saved him from extravagances of asceticism and mysticism to which such reading might otherwise have led. We conclude that he gave himself wholly to the duties he had accepted, with that method, promptitude, diligence, and enthusiasm which characterised all that John Wesley essayed, whether in youth or age. One of his maxims was, "Never be unemployed ; never be triflingly employed ; never while away time."

Perhaps in later years he adjudged his labours at this period as of little worth, as he did those of his missionary career in Georgia—concerning which, however, George Whitefield said, "The good Mr. John Wesley has done in America is inexpressible."

It was his father's wish that he should succeed him as rector of Epworth, and the parishioners supported that wish.

Recording his first visit to Epworth as an evangelist (1742), he says: "O let none think his labour of love is lost because the fruit does not immediately appear. Near forty years did my father labour here; but he saw little fruit of all his labours. I took some pains among this people too, and my strength also seemed spent in vain; but now the fruit appeared. There were scarce any in the town on whom either my father or I had taken pains formerly, but the seed sown so long since now sprung up, bringing forth repentance and remission of sins."

In "An Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion" (1744), he repudiates the charge that in the Methodist movement "*gain* was the spring of all his actions." He appeals to those who had known his manner of life during these twelve or fourteen years past; amongst others, to his old parishioners: "Ye of Epworth and Wroot, among whom I ministered for nearly the space of three years, what gain did I seek among you? Or of whom did I take or covet anything?"

His ready wit and unfailing cheerfulness, his sympathy with the sick and the poor, his love of children, his generosity, his charitable interpretation of other men's words and ways, the purity of his life, and his exceptional gifts as a preacher, may well have

secured for him great "favour in the eyes of the people."

During his curacy he visited Oxford, and was ordained priest by Bishop Potter (Sept. 22nd, 1728), who had admitted him to deacon's orders three years previously.

"It was not until 1730 (he says) that I began to be *homo unius libri*; to study (comparatively) no book but the Bible. I then saw, in a stronger light than ever before, that only one thing is needful, even the faith that worketh by the love of God and man all inward and outward holiness."

It is interesting to note that the idea of Christian fellowship, so largely incorporated in the organisation of the Society established in 1739, was first suggested when John Wesley was residing upon his curacy. He travelled many miles to converse with a "serious man," who said to him, "Remember you cannot serve God alone: you must either *find* companions or *make* them: the Bible knows nothing of a solitary religion."

In 1729 he returned to Oxford at the request of Dr. Morley, the Rector of his College, who urged that the duties attaching to his Fellowship required his presence at the University. Thus ended John Wesley's connection with parochial work, save in that ampler sphere concerning which he said, "I look upon the world as my parish."

